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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Friday, September 10, 2004 | 64 Pages | Vol. 20 | No. 294

Palace slams Senate hearings; businessmen back EO 464

By Christine O. Avendaño
and Sol C. Calacalgar Jr.

MALACAÑANG STOOD FIRM YESTERDAY on its decision to bar government officials from testifying in Congress, saying its hearings were nothing more than supervisory proceedings in disguise called out to rid of

PAGE A2

Luisita workers bitterly recall sugarcoated promises

By Blanche S. Rivera
and PDI Central Luzon Desk

PEDRO R. LAZA HEAD BACKPAY promises earlier V. 1995. He recalled one time a stockholder and all his 10 children could fit in a school.

And so like more than 6,000 other farmers,

NEWS A10

'Not a one-woman rule'

Bernas says GMA gag order on gov't officials is unconstitutional

By Armando Nocum,
Juliet Labog-Javellana
and Christian V. Esguerra

FATHER JOAQUIN BERNAS, dean emeritus of the Ateneo Law School and a noted constitutional expert, said President Macapagal-Arroyo could not invoke executive privilege to cover up allegations that she stole last year's elections.

Bernas said Executive Order No. 464 protected the legislative branch from exercising its police functions and disturbed the balance of power among the branches of government.

"It's a gag rule. She's obstructing the work of the legislature. She is blocking the checks and balances among coequal branches of government," he said. "We are still a rule of democracy, not a rule of one woman."

Administration and opposition senators also said yesterday they would challenge the lawyer's gag order before the Supreme Court.

The Constitution says only department heads cannot attend congressional hearings because the President's presidents, said Bernas. He said Sec. did not apply to Brig. Gen. Francisco Gudani who testified Wednesday before a Senate committee on alleged electoral fraud involving the First Gentle.

PAGE A2 AND A3

THE BEAUTY OF THE BEAST(S): Gen. Gen. Ruiz a picture called in St. Francis of Assisi, whose feast day is on Oct. 4, are celebrated worldwide as Animal Day when special events are held to heighten awareness of love between animals and God's other creatures. At the Malabon Zoo (From left) Bonito, Antonia, Manny (Tanguy, the camel), Pacquiao, Chavez-ralo and Eggie look forward to blessings on Sunday

Whodunit? Three gov't lawyers who drafted EO named

By Ed C. Catacutan Jr.
and Juliet Labog-Javellana

SEN. MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO, a staunch Arroyo ally, has urged the President to fire all those responsible for drafting the gag order on public officials and employees.

"The lawyers who drafted EO 464 are

PAGE A3

Cabinet men's absence derails Northrail probe

By TJ Burgonio

THE SENATE COMMITTEE OF THE whole opened its long-delayed investigation into the Northrail project, but Budget Secretary Romulo Neri, Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza and Presidential Chief Legal Counsel Merceditas Gutierrez were absent.

Executive Order No. 464, issued on Wednesday, banned government officials from appearing in congressional hearings without the approval of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"They're still very hesitant if they don't want to appear here," said Senate President Franklin Drilon, chair of the committee looking into the $503 million project to rehabilitate the railway system between Caloocan City and Malolos, Bulacan.

"We respect the rights of Sec. Ingles... so [because] he [was] the matter to the Supreme Court," Drilon said, referring to the presidential order.

Transportation Undersecretary Godfrey Mamauag, Monetary Board member Juanita Amatong, Nanette Abaya of the Bases Conversion Development Authority and Jose Ma. Ivanovich B. of the Philippine National Railways were also no-shows.

Jose Gorlez Jr., president of North Luzon Railways Corp. (Northrail), could never Dalisay supporting that the hearing be delayed until after he had been furnished a copy of the UP Law Center's study of the contract he bragged off from the hearing.

Unstrength, Rhea Gonzales, assistant government corporate counsel, showed up, saying that he was not covered by Executive Order No. 464 which bars administrative, police and military officials from appearing at congressional

PAGE A3

Even GMA allies in House oppose Palace order

EO 464 WORRIES: An aide's row of seats reserved for at least eight government officials at the Senate hearing on the $503-M Northrail project on Thursday is empty

By Philip C. Tubeza
and Michael Lim Ubac

EVEN PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo's staunch allies in the House are opposed to her order barring members of the executive branch from testifying at congressional inquiries without her consent.

In a joint statement issued yesterday, Speaker Jose de Venecia and other House leaders said there was "no valid reason" for the issuance of Executive Order No. 464. They said that while they supported Ms. Arroyo's "inherent right" under the Constitution to claim "executive privilege," the chamber would continue to invite officials from the executive branch "in aid of legislation and by virtue of the people's right to public information."

They also said the House had never "abused" or shamed "disrespect" to anyone invited as a witness or resource person of its hearings which, they pointed out, had never been used for

PAGE A3

EO 464 locks out gov't lawyer from own office

By DJ Yap

HEDWAY THROUGH THE SENATE hearing on the Northrail project yesterday, assistant government counsel Rhea Gonzales could not confidently because empowered in reading his own messages.

The messages were from his wife and secretary, he told the senators, And the messages were the same: His office was telling panhandled in his three-answering machines.

Executive Order No. 464 was to blame.

The EO issued only on Wednesday prohibits administration, military and police officials from appearing in congressional hearings without the approval of the President.

Gonzales said he did not have the permission of Mr. Executive only

PDI Back Page

PMA cancels honor parade for Gudani tomorrow

By Vincent Cabreza
With reports from Jaime Laude
and Dona Z. Pazzibugan
in Manila

FORT DEL PILAR, BAGUIO CITY—THE Philippine Military Academy yesterday canceled the Senior parade scheduled tomorrow for Brig. Gen. Francisco Gudani, its ranked graduate superintendent.

Gudani is due to retire on Oct. 4 but had begged off from the parade, according to Lt. Gen. Cesar delos Reyes, PMA superintendent.

"I asked him, 'Will we proceed with your commander this weekend?' He said, 'I don't think I can still afford to go up [to Baguio].'" Balmong told the Inquirer quoting Gudani.

The parade was to be part of the PMA's memorial for Gudani on the occasion of his retirement.

Many said Lt. Alexander Balutan, PMA assistant commandant of cadets, Gudani defied President Macapagal-Arroyo's Executive Order No. 464 forbidding them from testifying at the Senate wiretapping inquiry on Wednesday.

Gudani had testified he was privy to information that the President's husband, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, flew to Mindanao days before Election Day last year to deliver boxes containing a total of about P500 million.

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga promptly relieved Gudani and Balutan and ordered their court-martial.

"With what happened [at the Senate] ... I know the rule," Balmong quoted Senga as saying yesterday.

Balmong added: "What is the rule? If [a military official has] a pending case,

PAGE A22

A3
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2004
Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

4 terror suspects caught with bombs

By Edwin O. Fernandez
PEC Mindanao Bureau

PIGCAWAYAN, NORTH Cotabato – Government forces collared four suspected members of the Jemaah Islamiyah regional terror group and seized an improvised explosive from them at a mobile checkpoint here, military and police officials said Thursday.

Senior Insp. Basilio Dayan, Pigcawayan police chief, identified the suspects as Rasad Tandilan, 29, Abdulsalam Salik, 35; Sobsalin Dimla, 26; and Omar Bantas, 30. Dimla was reportedly a commercial worker from Cotabato City while the others were unemployed residents of Barangay Matilak here.

Dayan said terror agents showed the suspects boarded a passenger jeep bound for Cotabato City on Wednesday.

He said Tandilan, who was carrying the black backpack containing the explosive — a hill-size mortar shell fitted with a cell phone as a trigger — sat in the front seat with the bag between his legs.

Upon reaching the village after Matilak, Tandilan offered his seat to an old man and moved to the rear of the vehicle.

It is customary in the rural areas to offer one's seat to the elderly and women and to ride on the roofs of public utility vehicles.

At Barangay Binanungan, soldiers and policemen manning a checkpoint found the explosive in the bag.

A Nokia 3110 mobile phone had been hooked up to the explosive while Tandilan was carrying another phone, a Nokia 3310, with which he was going to call up the first phone to trigger the bomb, according to Brig. Gen. Agustin Dema-ala, commander of the army's 6th Infantry Division.

Dema-ala said the suspects may have been among the Jemaah members trained by the Al Ittihad Al Islamiyah group in Central Mindanao.

He said it appeared the suspects intended to inflict major damage as the bomb was a powerful one.

Dayan said three of the suspects were in police custody while Dimlakan was brought to 6th ID headquarters in Awang, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao.

Top police execs differ on anti-crime 'superbody'

By Luige A. del Puerto

TOP POLICE OFFICIALS CANNOT QUITE agree on how the new anti-crime "superbody" created by Malacañang will affect the special anti-crime units of the Philippine National Police.

Director Marcelo Ge Jr., who heads the 4,000-illegal Drugs Special Operations Task Force (Masa01), said the new body was primarily a "management tool" meant to harmonize the operations of various anti-crime units.

"It is a good approach in fighting criminal syndicates, which are themselves involved in different kinds of crimes," he said.

But another police official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said existing special anti-crime units could be subsumed under the new body which could take away much of their men and funds.

"That only hope is that the existing units will not lose their resources, like money, to the new body," the official said.

Under Executive Order No. 963, the President has ordered the creation of a National Anti-Crime Task Force, or Nartof, under the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Commission, or be headed by the Secretary of the Interior.

"Reinforcing task forces have been created to deal with specific crimes and there is a need to streamline these task forces to rationalize resources and formulate strategies that will intensify the fight against criminality," the EO said in justifying the creation of the super anti-crime body.

It is thought that the Narcof would take charge of the operations of all the task forces created to go after criminals, like the Aidsoft and the Police Anti-Crime and Emergency Response (Pacer), the anti-kidnapping task force.

The Narcof is supposed to make an assessment of all the anti-crime bodies created by executive orders and recommend their retention or abolition.

But some police officers fear are to call a meeting to discuss the mechanics and structure of the super body. PNP officials can only guess at how it will work out.

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Cebu Daily News editor dies; 43

By Jhunnex Napallacan
and Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY – SHORT UP TO THE END, CEBU Daily News (CDN) editor-in-chief Jose D. Sumaya was concerned until the paper he nourished and served for almost eight years. Cut down by a stroke but not completely incoherent, he would call or text the newsroom from his hospital bed, asking for answers if by sensed from his struggled paper that something was amiss.

Most of all, he was itching for work and looked forward to the operation that would mend a coronary artery damaged by the stroke. But it was not to be.

At 8 a.m. yesterday, barely six hours after a delicate, 12-hour heart surgery at Perpetual Succor Hospital, Sumaya succumbed to postoperative complications, said Eileen Mangubat, CDN publisher and acting editor-in-chief.

"He was a sensitive, brilliant editor in chief who developed the paper like an infant he fathered," Mangubat said.

Sumaya, 43, a former business correspondent and a native of Iloilo City is survived by his wife Cheselda, 35, and children Samantha, 10, and Isaiah, 5.

A two-day wake is planned at the Cosmopolitan Funeral Homes in Mrel Hills before Sumaya's remains are flown to Iloilo City on Saturday. Interment will be announced later.

Willy Rodolfo, CDN copy editor, told the Inquirer that Sumaya reported for work dog. 30 with a throbbing headache which he brushed aside, thinking it was due to just tired eyes. The next day, while he was about to report for work, Sumaya felt ill and decided to go to Cebu Doctors Hospital where doctors found he had just suffered a stroke.

He was moved a week later to Perpetual Succor Hospital's heart center where it was discovered that he had developed a heart problem. The doctors there decided to operate to repair Sumaya's damaged aorta.

Sumaya is the third of four children of Socrates Sumaya Sr., 83, and Arsadelfia Delos Santos Sumaya, 75.

He obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in social sciences, cum laude, from the West Visayas State University in Iloilo City in 1983. He also studied law at UP Diliman and University of San Augustin in Iloilo City.

RP to lose air defense as last of F-5 fighter jets go out of service

THE PHILIPPINE AIR FORCE will decommission the last of its 40-year-old F-5 fighter jets, leaving the country without any aerial defense until it acquires new ones, an air force spokesperson said yesterday.

Ceremonies for the decommissioning of the US-made "Freedom Fighter" jets will be held in Basa air base on Saturday, marking the last run of these aircraft.

Only about five F-5s are still operational, Major Augusto de la Peña said.

Because of lack of funds, "for the next six years, acquisition of new fighters are lost on the drawing board," said De la Peña.

In the meantime, the air force will use about five Italian-made SF211 trainers jets to serve as makeshift air defense aircraft, even though they are not designed or equipped to be fighters, De la Peña added.

"These are the trade-offs we have to accept because of our defense priorities," he said.

The Philippines acquired about 37 F-5 jets from its main ally, the United States, in 1965. But many of the jets were lost grounded, and the remaining aircraft are too expensive to maintain and repair, the major said. AFP

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By Leila B. Salaverria

A BUREAU OF CUSTOMS official yesterday said attempts to smuggle motorbikes into the country appeared to be on the rise because the high cost of fuel made the two-wheel vehicles more appealing to consumers.

BOC Deputy Commissioner Gallant Soriano said he had noticed an increase in the number of motorbike smuggling attempts in the last few months and attributed this to the need for cheaper alternative means of transport.

In a statement, Soriano said that in July alone, the bureau seized two shipments of motorbikes from South Korea that had been misdeclared as personal effects. Both shipments were found at the Port of Manila.

The first shipment, consisting of eight bikes, was stopped on July 14. Its consignee was identified as Manila Bay Jei-Ling Freight Forwarders Co. Inc.

Five days later, another 10 motorbikes consigned to a C.U. Guerra were intercepted.

The two shipments were among the P13-million worth of items seized by customs officials in July and August, according to Customs Intelligence and Investigation Service director Eric Albano.

Albano said that aside from the motorbikes, the BOC confiscated 10 container vans of shrimp fry from China that had been misdeclared as frozen fish, and a container van of textiles from Saipan whose weight had been underdeclared.

The shrimp fry, discovered on Aug. 30, were not covered by the proper permits from the Department of Agriculture. It was consigned to Universal Union Trading Corp.

Corrections

ASISTIO

IN THE SEPT. 26 ISsue, a story on Page A32 of the Sports section — "Asistio, Tabuena shine in Samsung golf" — mistakenly used the picture of Jay Bayron instead of Tonlits Asistio's. Above is the photo of Tonlits Asistio.

* * *

IN THE Sept. 27 issue, a story on Page A20 of the Metro section — "Suspect in ABS-CBN case to be released" — misstated the city where Barangay Wack Wack is located. Barangay Wack Wack is in Mandaluyong Cuty — not Muntinlupa City.

* * *

IN YESTERDAY'S issue, a photo caption on the front page misstated that Sen. Alfredo Lim formerly headed the Philippine National Police. Lim never occupied the top PNP post. He once headed the Western Police District and the National Bureau of Investigation.

Ex-governor, warden get jail terms for sheltering murder suspect

THE SANDIGANBAYAN HAS SENtenced a former provincial governor and a jail warden to 12 and 9 years in prison respectively, for shielding a town mayor accused of murder and keeping him out of jail for 95 days seven years ago.

In a ruling released Wednesday, the court's First Division said former Gov. Rupert Ardiñi Jr. and provincial jail warden Alejandrino Apolado of Eastern Samar were guilty of graft for extending "unwarranted benefits, advantage or preference" to Francisco Adalim, mayor of the municipality of Jolo who was accused of murder in 1998.

Court records show that on the day Adalim was to have been arraigned and jailed, his lawyer and lawyer went to Ardiñi's house and convinced the governor to take him under his care. Adalim stayed there for 95 days from Sept. 6, 1998 until he was allowed to post bail after his murder charge was reduced to homicide. Adrian Flavier

ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail at ...@inquirer.com.ph

Julius Bonnie G. Velarde

'I don't want to judge Maui'

Lani Mercado says she's just getting to know her son Brian's new girlfriend

By Marinel R. Cruz

HERE. Bong Revilla says talks about being a granny and not running for mayor of Lipa.

MANILA, Philippines—"Ayaw ko munang mag-judge agad-agad kung ano siya. Ayaw ko munang magsalita kung ano siya. Ayaw ko munang sabihin kung ano siya, gaano siya ang pagkatao niya," said Lani Mercado when asked to comment on the "image" of bold actress Maui Taylor, her eldest son's rumored girlfriend.

Bong Revilla, Lani's actor husband, Ruffa Gutierrez, Jolo Revilla, Bryan Revilla and Maui Taylor

Bong Revilla, 16-year-old Lani and Mrs. Ramon "Bong" Revilla, recently celebrated having a relationship with Maui, 23. Brian formally introduced the actress to the Revilla clan during the weekend's birthday party-for-work.

"I heard that she was nervous about meeting us. I think that (Maui's singer) was what she was worried about. But if I see that they're getting along well, I will not object," said Mrs. Revilla.

In the end, Lani said, she trusted Maui "charming" and "pleasant."

No gold digger

"I don't think she's what you might call a 'fabulous' girl (loosely, a gold digger). In fact it is she who gives very extravagant gifts," the actress told a group of reporters over lunch on Wednesday.

It was not the first time Brian introduced a girlfriend to her. Lani pointed out. "Every time my boys introduce their special someone to me, I would pray that they're not yet serious," she said. "But Brian is intelligent. He would always inform, 'I will have lots of dramas. I want to fulfill dreams first before I settle down.' He knows that he has to set a good example to his siblings."

Lani said she was not surprised to see Brian and Maui's pictures all over the papers because "they can't really keep their relationship a secret. They're both celebrities."

The actress was referring to the couple's pictures published in *Inquirer Entertainment*'s last week (*Inq7.net*, Sept. 26, 2005). The pictures were downloaded from Maui's multiply photos website.

Granny blues

Bong and Lani have six children—Brian, Jolo, Ria, Mikee, Londoño and Bryan.

Jolo, 26, has a son with Grace Ashcraft, 26, daughter of actress Rosanna Roces.

Ramon recently revealed Jolo is leaving up her daughter and demands him to visit their son. Jose Gabriel Revilla. Grace reportedly broke off with Jolo shortly after the birth of their son.

Jose Gabriel was given a DNA test at the National Bureau of Investigation on Monday. Lani said Jolo submitted his own DNA sample before he left for the United States, where he is a resident.

"It will take seven days or a month to get the result. I hope Jolo is really, however it turns out. We'll always stand by him," said Lani.

Asked whether she would like another grandchild, Lani said, "Ayaw ko pa! Ayaw muna. The family has been traumatized by what happened to Jolo."

As for politics...

Lani added that losing the mayoralty race in Cavite in 2001 was one of her most depressing experiences. Bong lost to the gubernatorial race that same year.

"We [devoted] so much of our time to the province. The whole family was affected [by the loss]. Our daughters didn't want him to run [for another public office]," she revealed.

"That was why Lani said, she would rather run for mayor in Lipa City, Batangas, in 2007. "People there have asked me to run. My mom is from Lipa[and, of course,] in Lipa," she explained. "Right now, I'm content with what I have. After I lost in the election, I decided that my family would be my priority."

Lani plays Olivia, a battered wife on GMA-7's new afternoon soap opera "Agos." The show premieres on Oct. 10.

Lani's co-stars are Christopher de Leon, Dennis Trillo, Geraldine Ilonzo, Tanya Garcia, Pilar Pilapil, Rodjun Cruz and JC de Vera. Miss Mercado directs.

DID YOU KNOW...

RICK Boyer[illegible], creator of the forthcoming Filipino spy thriller, left Wednesday for Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to attend the 50th Asia Pacific Film Festival, the former Metro Manila Film Festival. Cast has featured many Filipino artists. "Really," Dayanara said, "we have no comp[illegible]

Pinoy indie wins in Italy

CHEER FACTOR

RIMINI, Italy—"Lola at Tatlong Lalaki (Lola and Strangers)" was awarded a "Special Mention" by the Associazione Cattolica Esercenti Cinema (Catholic Exhibitors Association) in the "Spazio Immagini" competition of the Meeting per l'Amicizia tra i Popoli in Rimini, Italy.

The short film was earlier screened in Rotterdam (The Netherlands), Berlin (Germany), Busan (Italy), La Palma (Spain), Vila do Conde (Portugal) and Singapore.

Next month, "Lola at Tatlong Lalaki" will be shown in Sao Paulo, Brazil, along with Khavn's video "Da Maniac" short films. Next year, it is scheduled in the Asia and Caribbean programs of the FIFA World Cup in Germany.

Also showcased at the Meeting was Khavn's other short film "Banyang Basahan," as part of the exhibition [illegible] entitled "Around the World in 80 Minutes." Bayani San Diego Jr.

PCGG can't sell Imelda jewelry, ex-Solgen warns

By Alexis Pope

THE PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON Good Government (PCGG) does not have the authority to sell the jewelry seized from former First Lady Imelda Marcos.

This was the opinion advanced yesterday by Former Solicitor General and Ambassador to the UN Raul Gonzalez.

"The PCGG has no authority to dispose of the jewelry. It cannot do so. It has no mandate to supposedly scarcely suggested to be disposed," Gonzalez told reporters at the monthly Rotary Club of Manila meeting in Makati.

Gonzalez served in chief government counsel during the term of President Gloria Arroyo and worked closely with the PCGG to recover the billions of pesos stolen by the Marcoses.

Gonzalez said that under Executive Order No. 1 issued during the Aquino administration, the PCGG was "only limited to acquisitions to avoid the dissipation of the assets."

Gonzalez said that while it was possible to seek executive authority from the President to sell the jewels, "it is vital the assets declared as 'jewelry' are all genuine."

Gonzalez's opinion was backed by Former Magistrate Atty. Bayani Dilangalen, who was also at the meeting.

Dilangalen said he had tried every last petitioning to the PCGG but did not see any provision giving the agency the power to sell seized assets. "The PCGG would be exceeding the law. Of the jewelry were sold," he said.

But current PCGG Commissioner Ricardo Abcede said he saw no legal impediment to the sale of the Marcos jewelry.

Abcede said Executive Order No. 1 gave the PCGG the authority to "dispose of or transfer assets" seized from the Marcoses and there cannot that were proven to be ill-gotten.

"In the past, the PCGG had been disposing of unclaimed assets. It's easier to say there is no mandate to dispose of the assets and the jewelry. That's their own opinion," Abcede said.

He said judicial questions regarding the Marcos jewelry had already been resolved by the courts.

He said those against the sale should file another case "to assert judicial economy."

"And we are willing to assert them in court," he added.

The PCGG hopes to auction off the jewelry in Montreux in Switzerland. It had initially estimated the value of the gems at $10 million.

Recently, Abcede raised the estimate to $350 million (P19.4 billion) and mentioned the possibility of including Imelda's fabulous shoe and gown collection in the sale.

Estrada has run out of witnesses, prosecutors say

By Nelson F. Flores

INSISTING THAT THE DEFENSE presentation at the trial of deposed President Joseph Estrada was turning into a farce, Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio yesterday urged defense lawyers to conclude their presentation of evidence on the fourth-pending justice hearing the plunder and perjury cases against the ex-President or rule on the guilt or innocence of their client.

Villa-Ignacio made the call after reviewing the partial list of witnesses that the defense intends to present in court.

He said that with the exception of Estrada, none of the potential witnesses would testify on Monday.

This indicated that the defense panel had no real intention to end the trial, he said.

Villa-Ignacio said most of the names on the list could not possibly have anything to do with proving the innocence or guilt of Estrada.

He said a number have previously testified while some have become senior permanent fixture at the Senate like their endorsed representatives as defense witnesses, like former Davel Pap.

"Lokohan na ito. (This is becoming a farce)," said Villa-Ignacio.

Included in the list were the names of Cabinet members Ignacio Bunye, Angelo Reyes, Leonardo Montebon, Jr., Hermogenes Ebdane, and military and police generals Arturo Cacdac, Artemio Pacquing, Carlos Bugarin, Avelino Razon, Generoso Senga, Victor Nazareno and Avelino Razon.

Also offered as witnesses were Land Transportation Office assistant secretary Reynaldo Berroya, former justice secretary Hermenegildo Reyes, 12 senior department representatives from different Metro Manila offices and a number of lawyers.

Defense lawyer Rene Saguisag said it is in Estrada's right to present any witness he deemed necessary in his defense. He said the witnesses were essential in proving the defense panel claim that Estrada was a victim of selective prosecution, discrimination, unequal protection and persecution run of mentality.

Saguisag earlier claimed that the Sandiganbayan Special Division favoring Estrada's plunder case was "programmed to convict" the disgraced leader by rebuffing he was reinstituted by the anti-graft court.

Saguisag said the Supreme Court had already convicted Estrada of plunder when it allegedly "vested him from office" by screening in the then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as President in 2001.

He explained in a telephone interview that Estrada's removal was grave illegitimacy when Chief Justice Hilario Davide administered the oath of office to the latter.

"The administration of the oath of office was unlawful for 11 other justices who were voted to Edsa," Saguisag said.

By going there they accepted the view that Estrada was a plain, dirty who ought to be removed from office presidency," he said.

As a consequence, no lower court, the Sandiganbayan included, would go against the subscribe decision of the high tribunal, Saguisag said.

Another defense lawyer, Jose Flaminiano, said it was not the sworn duty of the prosecution to counter the accused but to seek justice even both, according to the defendant.

Kindergarten school, owners face tax raps

THE BUREAU OF Internal Revenue has charged a private-owned educational institution and its owners with tax evasion for failing to pay P9.6 million in taxes over a period of four years.

Aged Dulce Ibe Ann Adora Montessori Early Learning Center Inc. in Pasig City, also named in the charge sheet filed with the Department of Justice yesterday were owner Lourdes Cadiz, the school's president, her daughter Christine Lopez-Marla, the treasurer and other officers.

BIR Commissioner Jose Isidro Bating said that tax defiers did not fully declare the revenues it earned from tuition and miscellaneous fees, sale of books, and rentals amounting to P9.63 million, depriving the government of some P7.7 million in income taxes, including surcharges and interests, from 2001 to 2004.

In addition, the school failed to remit a total of P321.44 million in taxes it should have withheld from its employees during the same period. BIR officials said the company uses kindergarten schools in Nonthaya and Calamba Laguna.

"What is alarming here is that the tax dodging modus was committed by an institution which is expected to inculcate in the minds of youngsters the importance of paying our taxes correctly," Bating said. "If the institution itself evades the payment of its tax obligations, how can we expect the same to teach to students about the virtues of taxation?"

Lawyer Marian Cabacungan, BIR executive assistant for enforcement service, said the school charged P6,000 to P10,000 per student in tuition, books and other expenses per school year. Cynthia Balana and Armand Nunez

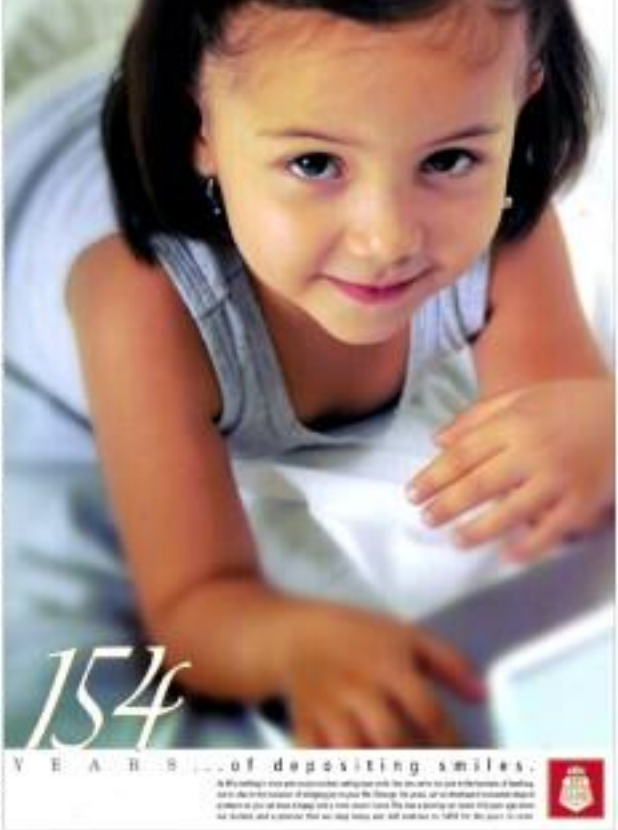
Farin; 84

REGGERY ICHACIO SRIN III, FOPARE mayor of Ba, Zambales died yesterday. He was 84. He was the husband of the late Feria Ba Rosario.

He is survived by his daughters Sonia, Elenor Belinda, Anna Adriana and Ann Carmen Benjamin "Ray" Feria Jr. of Ba, Zambales.

His remains lie at the Funeraria Paz on Aurora Blvd. until his transferred to Ba, Zambales on Tuesday.

Interment will be on Oct. 9 after the 9 a.m. Mass at the Ba Cemetery.



The WORLD

Editor Lorenzo B. Gozon

Japan seen pulling out of Iraq next year

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TOKYO—THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT IS CONSIDERing pulling its 600 troops out of Iraq in the first half of next year, the national daily Yomiuri Shimbun said on Thursday, but the government denied it had such a plan.

Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party has already approved an extension of the troops' current mandate, which expires on Dec. 14.

Japan's dispatch of military personnel, first approved in 2003, helped cement close ties between Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and US President George W. Bush, though the troops' activities are limited to humanitarian and reconstruction activities under Japan's pacifist constitution.

Japan's deputy chief cabinet secretary denied the report.

"The government is aware of the report. But there is no truth to the statement that it is considering such a plan," Defense Deputy chief cabinet secretary denied the report.

The Yomiuri said Tokyo was considering the exit plan as Iraq prepares for an October referendum on a new constitution.

I hope that the adoption of the constitution would improve security in Iraq now dampened this week by a report from the International Crisis Group released in London, saying the rushed approval process had deepened sectarian rifts.

But the main factor in deciding Japan's withdrawal strategy may be decisions made by Britain and Australia, whose troops provide security for the Japanese in southern Iraq.

Japanese officials have said it would be difficult for its troops to maintain security around their base in the southern Iraqi town of Samawa without back-up, the paper said.

The Yomiuri report said both Britain and Australia have told Tokyo they plan to withdraw from Iraq next year.

British Prime Minister Tony Blair has dismissed mounting calls to set a timetable for withdrawal of British forces, saying they will remain until local forces can maintain security. Reuters

Woman suicide bomber strikes Iraqi police

MOSUL, IRAQ—A WOMAN SUICIDE bomber blew herself up at an Iraqi police recruitment center on Wednesday, killing four people in an attack claimed by al-Qaeda's Iraq frontman Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

Another five people including two US soldiers were killed in scuffles as US President George W. Bush renewed appeals of an upsurge in violence ahead of next month's vote on the draft Iraqi constitution and elections in December.

"In these unfortunate approach, we can expect them to be increasing violence from the terrorists," Bush said at the White House. "They can't stand what Iraq. The thought of people voting is an anathema to them."

In Tal Afar in northern Iraq, a woman pushed her way into a crowd and blew herself up at a police recruitment center in the first insurgent attack in three since Iraqi forces announced the end of military operations 18 days ago.

It was believed to be the first attack by a female suicide bomber since the end of the 2003 US-led war to oust Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein but insurgents have repeatedly targeted army and police recruitment centers.

Speaking from his hospital bed, Jassim Mohammed, one of the 33 wounded, said the attack was carried out by a woman wearing Islamic dress. "It was a young woman. She pushed her way through the crowd and then there was an explosion."

Zarqawi's group, which is behind many of the most spectacular attacks and kidnapping and killing of foreign hostages, claimed responsibility in an internet statement that could not be verified. AFP

DESOLATE NEW ORLEANS
A pair of dogs wander the deserted streets of the Ninth Ward district of New Orleans Sept. 15. The area is nearly dried out for the second time since Hurricane Katrina devastated the area a month ago. —

9 dead in suicide attack on Afghan Army center

KABUL—A SUICIDE BOMBER ON a motorcycle blew himself up at an Army training center in the Afghan capital Wednesday, killing eight soldiers and a civilian and wounding 28 other troops, the defense ministry said.

Taliban rebels claimed responsibility for the powerful blast, which ripped through a crowd of soldiers waiting to take buses home from the base on the eastern outskirts of Kabul, officials and witnesses said.

It was the first major attack in Afghanistan since the war-scarred country held landmark parliamentary elections 10 days ago, and followed a period of relative calm in the city.

"Today just after 4:30 p.m. a man riding on a motorbike and wearing a military uniform carried out a suicide attack in front of the Khushhal Aimy Training center," defense ministry spokesperson Mohammad Zahir Azimi said.

Eight of the dead and all of the wounded were Afghan soldiers, Azimi said, while the bodies of four of the soldiers were too badly burned to be immediately identified. Three vehicles were also destroyed, he said.

A purported spokesperson for the ousted Taliban regime, which was toppled by US-led forces in 2001, said one of its fighters had carried out the attack on the base. His claim could not be verified independently.

"We take responsibility for today's suicide attack," Abdul Latif Hakimi said from an unknown location, "It was carried out by Mullah Dadar Mohammad, from Kabul. The number of casualties is much higher than the authorities say."

Witnesses and guards allowed the bomber through the gates of the compound because of his uniform. He then accelerated and opened the bike at a gap between the waiting buses.

"It was mid-lunch and I was waiting with everyone for their buses to go home, when I saw a motorcycle rushing towards lots of buses and people in the parking area," an Afghan Army major told an AFP reporter near the scene.

"Suddenly I heard a huge boom. I fell to the ground and when I stood up I saw several bodies scattered around. Two buses were on fire and there was human flesh around me."

Afghan President Hamid Karzai condemned the blast and ordered an immediate investigation.

"I am saddened that the lives of many Afghan people, mainly soldiers serving the Afghan nation, were lost. I condemn the attack in the strongest sense," he said in a statement.

A Western military source speaking on condition of anonymity said the victims were all Afghans and none were serving with either the US military or with the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Afghanistan.

Dozens of peacekeepers and police closed off the Jalalabad road leading the blast site. Many organizations have warehouses along the road, including the body in charge of the recent elections. AFP

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2 more kids in Indonesia possible bird flu victims

JAKARTA—INDONESIAN OFFIcials said Thursday they are investigating two more suspected bird flu deaths as local and foreign experts strove to stem an outbreak which has already killed six people and may have infected dozens of others this year.

Doctors will take blood and mucus samples from relatives of two children who died last week at Demak in Central Java province after showing symptoms similar to those of bird flu, said provincial health chief Budiharjo.

A health ministry official in Jakarta, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the country has had 63 confirmed or suspected cases of human bird flu infection so far this year.

Six of the 63 have died although tests on the latest fatality are still not fully confirmed for bird flu. Some of those infected have shown no symptoms and others have made a full recovery.

The H5N1 strain of the disease has also killed 43 in Vietnam, 12 in Thailand and four in Cambodia.

Indonesia has declared it is facing an "extraordinary" outbreak of the virus, allowing it to order suspected cases into hospital among other measures.

A team of Japanese experts arrived this week to advise on counter-measures and further shipments of the anti-viral medication Tamiflu have been imported.

The team are to visit the country's main hospital dealing with bird flu cases, the Sulianti Saroso hospital for infectious diseases in Jakarta.

The hospital on Thursday admitted an adult showing symptoms of the disease, bringing the total number of patients there to 16.

The health ministry official said the 63 cases could be broken down into three categories—confirmed, probable and suspected cases.

A suspected case shows clinical symptoms such as high fever, said Sardikin Giriputro, deputy director of Sulianto Saroso hospital.

The cases must also have had contact with possible sources of infection, such as fowls.

Probable cases have had initial tests that strengthened suspicion of infection, including X-rays showing that pneumonia had developed, he said.

Confirmed cases have clinically and serologically tested positive, and had the results confirmed by the World Health Organization through further tests in Hong Kong.

Only five of the 63 were confirmed bird flu cases, nine were probable cases and the rest were suspected, the ministry official said.

A second zoo was shut down Wednesday after two samples taken from birds at the facility in Semarang proved positive, city tourism office chief Agus Sudarmaji told AFP.

Jakarta's Ragunan zoo closed earlier this month for the same reason.

The WHO fears H5N1 will mutate, acquiring genes from the human influenza virus that would make it highly infectious and lethal to millions in a global pandemic.

But it has also urged calm, saying investigations in Indonesia had produced no evidence that H5N1 was spreading easily from person to person. *AFP*

Massive strike cripples India's airports, banks

MUMBAI/NEW DELHI—HUNDREDS OF thousands of bank workers and airport staff across India stayed away from work on Thursday to protest against economic reforms in a strike led by the ruling coalition's communist allies.

Airlines canceled or rescheduled flights, shutters were down at state-run bank branches and trading volumes on India's currency and bond markets fell to a trickle.

In Kolkata, the capital of communist-ruled West Bengal state once known as Calcutta, public transport was brought to a standstill and factories, offices and schools remained shut in protest against government plans for privatization, bank mergers and foreign investment in pension funds and airports.

In Mumbai, India's financial hub once known as Bombay, about a thousand bank workers carrying union placards marched from branch to branch shouting "Down with bank mergers!" and "Down with the government!"

The strike has been called by the United Forum of Bank Unions, which represents nearly 95 percent of more than 1.3 million bank and insurance workers.

India has about 300 banks led by State Bank of India and the Congress party-led government wants some of the public sector ones to merge and become more competitive but the unions say fewer bigger banks would not necessarily lead to strength.

C.H. Venkatachalam, general secretary at the All India Bank Employees' Association said, "The strike is successful. No cash transactions are taking place, no clearing activities are done."

Private sector and foreign banks, which do not have many staff in trade unions, were functioning although some said cash counters were closed. Stock market trading was normal. *Reuters*

R&D boon seldom gets to poor countries–UN

GENEVA—MULTINATIONAL CORporations are routing ever larger shares of their research and development activities to developing countries, but only a few such as China and India are benefiting, the UN said Thursday.

The current trend bypasses large parts of the developing world because countries short of by skilled workers, innovative domestic companies and a stable regulatory environment to attract such R&D funds, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development warned in its annual World Investment Report.

"For developing countries that currently have small innovation capabilities, an influx of R&D from transnational companies cannot be expected in the short term," the 352-page report said.

Meanwhile, overall global investment by business in foreign markets increased by 18 percent to $710 billion in 2004, marking a sharp reversal after a two-year decline.

The trend was driven by companies' quest to lower their costs and explore new markets, the report noted. Higher commodity prices, mainly for oil and minerals, have led businesses in several countries to unwind refining facilities in mineral-rich countries. Establishing the study pointed to a rebound in international mergers and acquisition activities.

Although the intertransnationalization is not new, oil major companies pressures have companies to innovate faster and to do so at lower costs.

Most large international companies such as General Electric Co., Vodafone Group PLC and Ford Motor Co. earned China as their preferred location for future R&D expansion, followed by the US and India. Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand are also benefiting, the study noted.

"Some new core parts of the developing world as key sources not only of cheap labor, but also of generic skills and even new technologies," UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said in the preface to the study.

In the past, companies invested in foreign markets to adapt their products to local needs and tastes, but now they tend to develop their technology for the regional or even global market.

For example, Southeast and East Asia now account for one-third of the global semiconductor design industry, compared to almost nothing in the mid-1990s, while US-based businesses are now carrying out over 10 percent of their overseas R&D in Asia, up from 5 percent in 1994. In China, the number of foreign R&D units rose from zero to 700 within 10 years.

Another new trend is that emerging economies profiting most from the inflows, China and India, are themselves becoming important investors abroad. For example, China's growing demand for natural resources has resulted in large investment projects in Latin American countries.

"They are not only attracting (funds) but also becoming overseas investors," Rat Bamdee, vice president of the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies told a news conference in New York. "Other countries that I think will join in ... Latvia, Russia, Malaysia, Brazil, Mexico, South Africa, Turkey."

Almost half of global foreign investment originates in the United States, Britain and Germany, the report said, with outflows from developing countries increasing by 98 percent, to $220 billion. In contrast, foreign investment by businesses in the Europeans increased by 25 percent, to $250 billion.

Asia and Oceania, which count as one region, are the top recipients. The region attracted $146 billion in funds, almost 50 percent more than in 2003. In sending investments, Hong Kong is the main driver in East Asia, while South Asia received $7 billion flowing mainly into India. AP

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Bin Laden eyed asylum in Britain, says ex-minister

BIN LADEN

LONDON—OSAMA BIN LADEN will be the well-positioned enemy of the West, but a decade ago Saudi dissident supporter Osama bin Laden considered seeking asylum in Britain, the country's former minister of foreign has said.

Michael Howard told The Times on Thursday that the regime from the al-Qaida chief approached to be welcomed in Britain.

According to the newspaper, in 1991 Bin Laden learned to abandon his chateau in Sudan and asked some of his followers in London to scout out suitable for would be able to move to Britain.

At the time, the Saudi-born radical was little known in the West, although al-Qaida had already planned an abortive plot to destroy a series of airliners, seen as a precursor to the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States.

A member of Bin Laden's teachers and other members of the wealthy family contacted his empire around people in the London area, the paper added.

"In truth, I know little about him, but we picked up the information that Bin Laden was very interested in coming to Britain," Howard, now leader of the main opposition Conservative Party, told the paper.

"It was apparently a serious request. By already had people scouting here, and that shows how luxury special were immersion if he had turned up here."

Howard noted that if Bin Laden had come to Britain to join the Sept. 11 attacks, in theory he could not have been sent for trial to the United States as British laws prevent the extradition of suspects to countries where they could face the death penalty.

However, no application was made as Home Office officials investigated Bin Laden and Howard stood up immediately banning order under immigration laws.

The Times cited Home Office officials as saying that Bin Laden used a fraudulent businessmen, Khaled al-Fawwaz, to assist out his chances of coming to Britain.

Fawwaz was described by British security officials as Bin Laden's "de facto ambassador" in Britain, the paper added.

According to some reports, the teenage Bin Laden went round Europe with his father, and even becoming a fan of London football club Arsenal, although there is no concrete evidence to back this up.

Bone fill leaves invaded Afghanistan following Sept. 11, Bin Laden is spent the years in hiding, and is widely believed to be sheltering along the rugged and remote Afghanistan-Pakistan border. AFP

US Congress warns Japan of sanctions over beef

PHILADELPHIA — THE US CONGRESS TODAY confirmed possible sanctions against Japan Wednesday if it did not lift a 15 month ban on imports of American beef, putting pressure on President George W. Bush to resolve the biggest pending bilateral issue.

"At some point you draw a line, this hearing is drawing the line. There are no more tomorrows," Bill Thomas, the Republican chair of the House of Representatives ways and means committee, told US government officials after they testified on the beef issue and other matters seen as problems with Japan.

"It is absolutely astounding," a fuming Thomas said of Japan's reluctance to ease the ban on US beef, which is draining the American cattle industry $400 million every month.

Thomas did not say what measures would be taken but the Republican head of the House Agriculture Committee Bailey Chambliss said Thursday that trade sanctions might have to be taken to underline growing US frustration at Japan's failure to lift the ban.

More than 100 legislators have written to Bush asking that he make restoring market access for US beef to Japan his highest economic priority until Jerry Moran, the representative from Kansas, demanding a House vote on retaliatory economic measures on Japan.

Moran, who hails from the largest beef-producing state in the nation, demanded that a pending House bill seeking sanctions on Tokyo be put to a vote to "show Japan that we are serious" about the issue.

"Japan ... cannot have it both ways—they cannot broadly frame regulations in the US while denying our imports, such as beef, with no scientific evidence to support their actions," he said.

Loss of revenue from the US beef ban is burning "a large and negative impact on our entire beef industry and we will withdraw our bilateral trade relationship," he said.

Some 18,000 jobs have been lost since the ban.

The US Senate voted last week to ban imports of a Japanese delicacy, fugu beef, until Tokyo lifts the ban on US beef. Kobe beef comes from cattle massaged with sake and fed a diet enriched with beer.

Tokyo had imposed the ban after the United States confirmed its first case of mad cow disease in December 2003. AFP

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BUSH ally Rep. Tom DeLay AP

US House leader quits over finance indictment

WASHINGTON—TOM DELAY, A POWERFUL political ally of President George W. Bush, stepped down as head of the Republican majority in the House of Representatives Wednesday after being indicted on a campaign finance charge.

DeLay vowed he was only stepping aside temporarily, and said the case by a Texas prosecutor was part of a "partisan vendetta." But the indictment came as a political bombshell in Congress as the President George W. Bush struggles to push his legislative agenda.

A Texas grand jury charged DeLay and two political associates of converting $190,000 in corporate money into individual campaign contributions to avoid campaign finance restrictions.

The Washington power broker could be jailed for between six months and two years and face a $10,000 fine if found guilty. He had to step down as the majority leader under congressional rules.

"I have notified the speaker that I will temporarily step aside from my position," DeLay said in a statement. House Republicans named Roy Blunt of Missouri as the new leader. He will share the job with Congressman David Dreier of California.

Senior Republican colleagues rallied around DeLay.

"We stand firmly behind Tom DeLay and ask that he be afforded the same rights as every other American—that is innocent until proven otherwise," said House Speaker Dennis Hastert.

The DeLay case has been investigated since an election in Texas in November 2002 by Ronnie Earle, district attorney for Travis County.

Without going into details on the case, Earle told a press conference in Texas, "Our job is to prosecute abuses of power. Our job is to bring those abuses to the attention of the public through juries."

DeLay, widely considered one of the most powerful political operators in Washington, has faced a series of ethics allegations.

The 58-year-old former pest exterminator, who comes from Sugarland, Texas, is known as "The Hammer" for his sometimes ruthless approach to politics.

He has masterminded Republican election victories as well as pushing through White House goals in Congress. DeLay was also instrumental in Republicans taking control of the Texas legislature from the Democrats.

DeLay seemed relaxed as he vigorously condemned the prosecutor at a press conference in the Capitol building. *AFP*

BUSINESS Friday

E-mail to: business@inquirer.com.ph
Business Features Editor Margie Quiroz-Espino

More than just freight

By Margie Quiroz-Espino

YOU SEE THEM trucks plying the streets of Manila. Those who live in the southern part of the Metro sprawl are more familiar with them because many of their clients are located in the industrial estates of Cavite and Laguna.

The trucks are painted white with the name Exel in blue in simple font. Most who see the trucks have no idea what the name stands for nor what are inside the trucks.

The firm's website best describes what the company is about: "The work of Exel touches many aspects of our day-to-day lives, across the globe. 24 hours a day. As you sleep, Exel is delivering the food that you buy and the print that drives your car that we help build and service. As you go about your daily routine, your mobile phone, personal computer and household electronics have been touched by our teams and our solutions to ensure that you have the choice and efficiency that today's world demands. When you retire, our solutions support the medical care you receive and ensure the prescriptions you need are waiting for you and your family.

"With around 111,000 employees in over 120 countries worldwide, our solutions to a wide range of manufacturing, retail and consumer industries are supported by highly skilled people and leading edge technology."

Merger

Exel was born from the merger of two major European groups—Ocean Group Plc and NFC in the National Freight Consortium. In the Philippines, the Ocean Group had a subsidiary—ANAX Global Logistics, a freight forwarding firm, which has been in operation in the country since 1985. In 2000 it was renamed Exel Logistics Management Philippines Inc.

Exel has an annual $11 billion worldwide turnover.

From being a relatively quiet firm with vast logistical and freight resources, the firm is now adopting a more high-profile stance to market its services and remind us what they are all about.

"We handle the raw materials needed by a plant. We do the ordering, receiving and storing in the warehouses. We do procurement, forecasting activities like storing goodies and adding the dyes for soap. We sometimes deliver to finished goods and sometimes we store even the finished products," explains Jojo Dela de Rivera, Exel's senior manager for business development.

Consultative approach

Sometimes Exel does unsolicited packaging for promotions like when a company has a buy-one-take-one offer, they do the repacking.

Although their business in the Philippines had been largely freight forwarder of MNAS, Jojo says they are now adopting a more "consultative approach" to selling their solutions.

The whole freight is a highly competitive business.

"It is highly commoditized, meaning you pay a price per weight and time to deliver. We are looking for areas where we can provide more value," he notes. "We are developing tools to help show where we can differentiate ourselves and provide consultancy for the supply chain."

Specifically, Exel provides technical, strategic and inventory optimization to supply chain management. Technical refers to helping companies determine how big a warehouse they need, and how many people are needed.

Strategic refers to the network design and transport routing of goods and equipment.

"Our end goal is to serve the needs of client firms," Jojo adds.

Exel country director Michael Beckley acknowledges that setting up the correct systems for a firm involves investments and risks. But he assures that even if they are not hired for the entire scope of the job, their customers always carry a contingency clause.

Beckley says they are in the middle of talks with several firms, for new services.

Two major retailers are using Exel to take care of their inventory management.

The clients Exel will tell the firms how much to buy of what. "Exel is not up to us to tell them what not to buy," Michael Beckley notes. This is usually the job of the company's merchandiser.

For another retailer, Exel is working out how our warehouse can become the drop-off point for thousands of goods such that these same goods can be delivered on the different branches within the day these were received.

Michael says the market for logistics management has been growing by double digits every year especially in the consumer retail sector. Exel had 500 employees five years ago, today it has 800.

It is Michael's job to oversee the 800 employees and as the

TAKE LOGISTICS Exel employs more than 800 people under nine sectors as Director Ken Foot makes an offer.

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OPINION

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On the same boat

THE DEPARTURE OF THE FIRST BATCH OF THE "returnees" of the so-called "boat people" marked a poignant moment for both Vietnam and the Philippines. On the one hand, it brought the refugee problem that swept Southeast Asia and the West in the early 1980s after the victory of the communists in Indochina to its closing chapter; even as it leaves unresolved questions on how to deal with asylum-seekers fleeing from totalitarian regimes.

EDITORIAL

The boat people represents the wages of the Cultural Revolution, which was borne out of the utopian fantasy that was communist neofascism, in their eagerness to reinvent the economic wheel, the communist ideologues and bosses sent professionals and merchants—the bourgeois elite in their estimation—to the farms for reeducation. Although the degree of cultural experiments varied (it seemed harsher in Cambodia than in Vietnam), the fantasy turned into a monumental nightmare. Industries and professions were emptied of intellectuals, educators, scientists and businessmen. Poverty was socialized. Widespread famine ensued. Blind to its own dependencies that caused the general poverty, the communist bosses freely painted their guns at the people. Rice fields became killing fields.

Not wishing to be part of the killing fields, thousands of Indochinese boarded rickety boats and headed for the high seas. They would rather brave uncertain weather than face certain death at home. Their incredibly bad touches of sunburn—and this sunburn defied reservations—particularly in the West—that the boat people were not political dissidents but merely "economic migrants." The tag glosses over the fact that the search for political sanctuary is as much a product of economics as politics.

The Philippines, of course, knows the economic determinism that propels a diaspora. Filipinos themselves have made an art out of migration. Many of them take pride in the income they make from their jobs abroad—income that translates to dollar remittances to their home country and keeps the domestic economy afloat. But they themselves admit that if they could make generous income at home, they would rather stay put. They know that the Indochinese people were hurting. They felt the hurt.

Perhaps, that explains why, unique among Southeast Asians, the Philippines welcomed the boat people instead of turning them away. It put up refugee processing centers in Puerto Princesa and Bataan that became models for refugee-hosting around the world. When the Ramos administration in 1996 put its foot down and refused to accept more boat people, even turning away one batch and leading it back to the waters of the high seas, the Catholic Church and civil society cried foul. The Ramos administration received a stern scolding; it later backtracked on its policy of forced repatriation.

The Catholic Church, through Bishop Ramon Arguelles, the military chaplain at that time and chair of the bishops' commission on migration, raised money to purchase a 10-hectare land in Palawan that came to be known as Vietville. When the village was inaugurated in 1980, a US-based Vietnamese Buddhist monk came to the inauguration and praised the Philippines and the Catholic Church. "We have heard praises for what you have done for the people," said the Venerable Thich Giac Nhien. "I'd like to tell the world of our admiration for the Church and the government of the Philippines."

Today Vietville showcases the acculturation of the Vietnamese and other Indochinese to Philippine life. It shows how Filipinos practice their hospitality not only in word but in deed. Early this week, when 228 of the 1,600 stateless individuals left the Philippines for the United States, many expressed profuse thanks to the Filipinos. They said they would surely miss the sounds, sights and senses of the Philippines—from television variety shows such as "Eat Bulaga," to Filipino dishes such as the sour broth *sinigang*, and even the unique brand of Filipino humor that pokes fun at Filipino misery and travails. The same humor made them endure the ordeal of being "stateless" persons, they said.

But despite the backdrops, the Philippines will continue to play a humanitarian role in refugee problems. Bishop Arguelles said it best about the boat people and about the Filipinos' willingness in helping them: "They are not here knocking on our doors. We have accepted them to share in our simplicity. We will do this again if given the chance." The prelate's message was clear: Filipinos will continue to help those fleeing injustice and pinning, and it's not just because they're on the same boat.

Unfinished footbridges on Commonwealth

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

I READ IN THE NEWSPAPERS SOMETIME AGO that the Metro Manila Development Authority will construct about 10 more footbridges in various parts of the metropolis—three or four of them in Quezon City before the MMDA does that, shouldn't it first finish the two unfinished footbridges on Commonwealth Avenue? One is at the corner of Tandang Sora Avenue; the other is midway between Tandang Sora and the Fairview/Commonwealth.

The two footbridges are almost complete, and it's a shame that they cannot be used because a few parts are missing. The Tandang Sora footbridge needs only the last span, over the right lane of Commonwealth Avenue going to Fairview, and the stairs on that side. The other footbridge needs only the stairs on both sides. Meanwhile, pedestrians risk life and limb when crossing the wide Commonwealth thoroughfare as a sign of spending subsides spread through.

The unfinished footbridges have been abandoned for so long that the steel beams and sprouts are beginning to rust. The construction activities on the footbridges were suspended during the 2004 poll campaign. Big billboards were put up to announce that they were projects of President Macapagal-Arroyo. The billboards carried her smiling face to make sure people didn't forget her contribution.

Even after the elections, the government forgot they were still unfinished. The billboards just stopped working and the billboards were left on rusty.

There's some mystery here. I asked MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando why the unfinished footbridges are being left to rust, and he answered that they are not MMDA projects but the Department of Public Works and Highways'. I asked a public works undersecretary the same question, and he replied that they are MMDA projects; the DPWH only provided the building materials. Now, what's the truth?

I think Fernando is telling the truth because both unfinished footbridges are painted silver, MMDA bridges are painted with MMDA distinctive pink-and-blue trademark. DPWH bridges are painted silver, like that one near the Quezon Memorial Circle in Commonwealth. Even where the units are painted with the habit.

Considering that the DPWH constructed bridges in Nueva Ecija in places with no streets, it is strange that the agency refuses to finish these two relatively small footbridges, which are sorely needed by pedestrians. It is also strange that Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte has not asked the DPWH to finish them. Still they just allow them to rust and collapse?

* * *

Still another mystery is the behavior of the policemen and traffic aides assigned to the Tandang Sora-Commonwealth intersection. This is a very busy intersection, despite the existence of the flyover. Pedestrians risk their lives when they cross this part of Commonwealth. There are pedestrian lanes—the paint now fading—but drivers don't pay attention to them.

There is a big sign here saying "Strictly no loitering for pedestrians—DP" (for the Office for Transy Attiramiles, the mayor). But nobody pays attention to this sign, not the drivers, not the commuters, and not the traffic enforcers. Buses and jeepneys stop right on top of the pedestrian lanes. Taxis and cars block them in the path of pedestrians wanting to cross; and they load and unload passengers in violation of traffic regulations with impunity. There are even "barkers" for the jeepneys.

And what about the cops. There are many traffic enforcers around, some in yellow shirts, others in blue. The yellow shirts come from the City Hall and the blue shirts are from the MMDA. At times, a number of motorcycle cops and police cars are parked under the flyover. And there is a police community precinct with a small jail right under the flyover, literally within spitting distance from the crossing. But traffic here is terrible at all times.

Nobody tells the drivers not to block the pedestrian lane and not to load and unload there. Nobody tells the barkers not to ply their business there. Nobody arrests the drivers loading and unloading passengers on the forbidden places. The government has built two waiting sheds, one on each side of Commonwealth, to protect commuters from rain and rain, but nobody uses them. Instead, commuters stand in the middle of the street to wait for rides.

What are the traffic enforcers doing? Has one of them been there, rousing their arms at passing vehicles but nobody obeys them—and they don't care. As long as they wave their arms, they think they're doing their jobs.

The bucket, standing beside policemen on the pedestrian lane, bankrupted by the big fines handing out for traffic violations, begs in vain for passengers. Jeepneys stop beside them to wait and load passengers, but the policemen don't do anything, but wave their hands.

And they don't tell the commuters to wait for their rides at the waiting sheds.

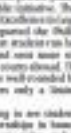
On the other side of Commonwealth, the MMDA has erected is standard concrete and steel fence to prevent vehicles from stopping at the corner where commuters are in the habit of waiting for rides. So the commuters now wait on the outer side of the fence, literally in the middle of the street. And the jeepneys and buses stop there to pick them up, thus blocking the vehicles behind.

There are traffic enforcers here, too. They stand with the commuters in the middle of the street, waving their arms at the vehicles, but they don't tell the commuters to wait before the sheds on the waiting shed, which is only a few steps away. And they don't arrest the drivers who illegally stop there to load passengers.

Do these traffic enforcers know what they're supposed to do?

On the joys of 'deaning'

PASSION FOR REASON



Raul C. Pangalangan

FOR THE PAST SIX YEARS, DAVID SERVED AS law dean at the University of the Philippines, built on the botanical office held by Justices George Malcolm, Jose Laurel, Vicente Abad Santos, and Irene Cortes, and UP presidents Jorge Bocobo and Vicente Sinco. I became dean at 40 and, by some sense, I will end my career.

I plan to go quietly and, in fact, will soon leave for a "sabbatical" at—if I like scenery (also with castle in Italy, an assignment I made a year ago. Have longed for this time of contemplation with a select group of philosophers, artists, and scientists from other countries, by way of inaugurating my newly won freedom as a full-time academic.

As soon as the UP board of regents (BOR) elected Professor Salvador Carlos as my successor, I immediately congratulated my former professor and wished him the same grace that has blessed my deanship. Though all has not been quiet since then, and various reviews have been solely to the press. Never thought to remain quiet, preferring to revel in the friendship that I have thoroughly enjoyed.

A law school is both academic, meaning, answerable in a community of scholars and professional, meaning, accountable to the bench and bar and the clients, the public. To the bench and bar and the clients, the public. To the rest of the professional, and the law school ends up merely "examining power with piety," outlining the world it was supposed to change. Too much of the academic, and the law school abdicates the practical task of training lawyers who will minister to the public.

In this task, I have enjoyed the camaraderie of faculty colleagues and, in particular, the inspiring task of mentoring young lawyers—law apprentices, honor graduates, LLM- then learned courses abroad, law firm partners and public interest practitioners—to teach and research with us. Junior faculty were sent for graduate studies at Harvard, Yale, Columbia and NYU—and they returned to teach.

Another fun part of a dean's life is thanking the alumni and benefactors who have given scholarships to help bright needy students advance their dreams of becoming lawyers. They have also canvassed Malcolm Hall, showing what can be achieved when private philanthropy joins hands with public initiative. They have funded new gifts for faculchairs (Cayetano Herting and Bautista), supported the Philippine Law Journal, the oldest student-run law journal in the country), and sent more students to international moot courts abroad. The learning of students must be well-rounded because the classroom fosters only a limited range of heavenly skills.

It was truly heart-warming to see students severing public interest internships in human rights, children's and women's rights, indigenous peoples' rights and environmental law. The DPW bank of our legal aid office helps soften the sound cuts of migrant labor. Our evangelical students volunteers have assisted the Bureau of Internal Revenue, the Bureau Estat-inquiry, and our trial courts. Sometimes I wonder how long they can sustain their idealism in that harsh and ruthless world.

Finally, I initiated streamlined programs on topics as diverse as blogging, estate planning, ecotourism to social-justice communities.

Those delights are sometimes offset by the controversy that comes with the territory, i.e., the nexus between law and politics. While I have politely declined requests for interviews on the relentless of the law dean, I now feel obliged to briefly note misconceptions.

Having completed two terms, I stood for a third term after 46 of my colleagues signed a petition of support. Following a constitutional process, UP Diliman Chancellor Sergio S. Cao selected me—out of four nominees, citing—"student noble—what a 2002 independent evaluation called "a renaissance for the law school." He sent the recommendation to the UP president, who forwarded it to the BOR. It was, however, at this stage that the BOR decapped my name from the terms, citing their prerogative to interrupt the rules. The settled rule allowed a third term under exceptional conditions which, Chancellor Cao urged in his recommendation, I had fully satisfied. I was only grateful that the academic community who actually know my work have validated my six years of service.

Sympathetic friends have asked: Might things have been different had I not joined a leftist opinion at the joint hearings of Congress, saying that the title-bogus legal texts admitted in evidence? Or had I not written a strong, strong letter juxtaposing to investigate the rules. The settled rule allowed a third term under exceptional conditions which, Chancellor Cao urged in his recommendation, I had fully satisfied. I was only grateful that the academic community who actually know my work have validated my six years of service.

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The law school is the institution of reasoned debate. You may think that democracy is only about people choosing outcomes, rather than choosing values. We love to tell about value-deniers, until when a 07-year president calls on the President of the Republic to account for unexplained cash with an election officer, he merely lives on the gospel that he preaches in the classroom, especially that part that says, "Public office is a public trust."

I have enjoyed the work immensely. I have savored the moment. The Talmud says: "Today until loved, makes every yesterday a lesson of happiness, and every tomorrow a vision of hope. Look well, therefore, to this day."

* * *

Comments to pascalpr@aol.com

Visiting 'Amerika'

COMMENTARY

Luis V. Teodoro

THE UNITED STATES IS PARTICULARLY TO MOST people. But that would refer to the continent. When applied to the United States, it is better spelled with a "k," as in "amerika."

It's the country to most Filipinos was to visit. But it's the evil behind-the-scenes to any grouper activist. Namely progressives, if you have relatives or friends who have lived there, or you're from a country due to officials are hailed "no-visa groups", you'd be stopping late to go there. An acquaintance who is a pro-amerika progressive, a could earn you a ugly search, an interrogation session with the FBI or immigration, summary deportation, or even indefinite detention.

Retired Brigadier General Ramon Montaño Jarque and his wife Nena had visited this our last week while they landed in Subic. Singled out for interrogation, the Jarques, both in their 60s, were also detained handcuffed, ensuring deportation, and jailed with undesirables. The charge: possible connection to Islamic terrorist group was a National Democratic Front consultant on the peace talks in the 1990s.

The Jarques arrest in the United States to visit relatives. Like many Filipinos, they're linked to the military. Montaño graduated with the Philippine Military Academy class of 1968, commanded artillery, combat and service schools and regiments after the fleet.

The Montaño frame is not a rare place for non-whites in the United States, especially in the form of aliens. We don't really want to live there—even if you think there's room to the dust. We'll wouldn't, a gas-guzzling car, Mickey Mouse promoting universal Disneyland, and indulging many of export goods as the new Hollywood's display and self-respect. But I confess: I've visited the United States several times to see relatives, and even briefly lived there during separate better times.

In 1978, former Cabinet was US president Carter had identified the US policy—in place since the Johnson administration—of supporting dictatorships, that America tolerated opponents of dictatorship within its borders. Many Filipino exiles opposed to the Marcos regime were there because the US Embassy let pressure the community organizations or leadership. Observers of suspected terrorists without the benefit of lawyers and visits by relatives, among other reasons.

But this situation is not unique to the United States. It continues to become the country's response to the United States world order (BOC millions of people go to bed hungry daily), drives millions from their countries to look for opportunities abroad,—especially in the United States.

And progressives are not the only targets of US residents. Some 12 million are poor, and millions of US citizens—from large hungry families to take on currently vacant jobs, with some 50,000 jobs. About some 4 million US citizens are legal. Indeed, School shootings by students have been described as "an epidemic," homeless, rapes and armed robberies of it common, with one violent crime for every 37 US residents occurring every day. The millionaire people are in US prisons, as the cost of stories of which Saturday earth as it does is one and majority.

Racism is as common as grass in the United States, where everybody's right if you're white, hard-working, and has the right skin color. And they hate their young. Gentle school children unlucky look each look upchuck as "hippie", "hippy," "chink," etc., as each other what they called.

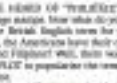
It's a habit of thought that starts with shots all their lives, attended on the job, in school or on the street—where basic being a "thugs" (Asian) or a homosexual can earn you a beating by name gangs.

"America" isn't in the least. It's in the colonial mind, "America" being the reality You don't want to want to live there, and wanting it is like wishing you were born in the 1950s.

Except that today you don't have to be Asiatic, you just have to be different.

Luis V. Teodoro is a professor of Journalism at the University of the Philippines

Collectibles



PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

MANY OF YOU HAVE HEARD OF "PUBLICITY" BEING issued collecting postage stamps. Now what do you think a "badlandy"? That's the British English term for collecting phone cards. As usual, the Americans have their own term, which is "telegety." And Filipinos? Well, there was the unsuccessful attempt by PLDT to popularize the term "Tootie" for a phonecard collector.

You may "phonecollect" and "hantaxicate" and all kinds of other "related" to the Greenhills image where they have spotted hundreds of millions of dollars in "telegety." The image has spread further, even, sometimes concerning an phone, other times an appliances, but it's done with the idea that "empty items

Pinoy Kasi

Michael L. Tan

Amy's postcards

Some people still send stuff in the stuff in e-tokens and booklets, until they find out what their prizes are. Who would have known that steel phone cards would still be worth anything? A few of the readers told me that they believe it or not their Visa's phone card, the one-denomination is P1,000. Can you imagine that—a card still worth its half of its original face value even after it had been used?

There were at least three dealers at the Greenhills image buying and selling phonecards. One of them told me the prices are still booming. Even the cards that the companies aren't issuing too many new phonecards now, the used-cell phones taking over.

Actually, many of the cards are quite drab. I've not seen in the past dozen how unimaginative we can be with our phonecard designs, reflecting our inability to appreciate and tap local culture. There are quite a few cards boasting ads for commercial products, from Magnolia milk to pharmaceuticals. We also get a lot of Walt Disney cartoon characters, pop singers the Pearls, and lots of cards featuring basketball players. My dealer friend says videos should appreciate for one card based on its rarity.

But there are a few good ones on Philippine wildlife, and some on our exotic spots. The Independence centennial (1897-1998) did have some good "artsy" entrants from the phone companies. Favorites had their "turnout" collection featuring the paintings of Manuel Amorsolo, the "Landscapes" series in Sampaloc-era and 1861). PLDT had a "Invitation Series" featuring four paintings by Carlos Botong Francisco, as well as a Centennial Paintings Collection, featuring paintings by Juan Luna and Fabi Hidalgo. One dealer wanted P300 for the PLDT card which featured a Fabi Hidalgo painting.

There was a memorable set of phonecards, too. It's Globe's series to Philippine Democratic 1989-2007" written by Maribel L. Bautista, with a foreword from then Rep. Feliciano Belmonte Jr., who apparently ordered phonecards it was from that point where I learned the terms "telegety" and "badlandy."

Nostalgia

Why this compulsion to collect things like cards? Collecting tokens is nostalgia, an attempt to keep something of the present so that later it becomes a memento of the past. Many of the collectibles are small—selling for pocketfuls nostalgia.

Some of the cards are also collectible because of the design. Designs even have flyers offering to buy, among other things, "Boy Scout items especially Zeb World Jamboree," "Elvis and Beatles 78 rpm records," "old Philippine cigarette labels," "every vintage toys like cars or sets."

On taking faith seriously

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST HAS always been likened by the pastoral to the ship. While it is true that the Church emphasizes the salvation of souls, it does not dismiss the need of developments in the temporal domain. For example, Pope Paul VI wrote in his encyclical "Populorum Progressio" about the importance of the development of peoples, which contains not only 'all things spiritual but also material, its moral than there could be no true spiritual development without the body first receiving its needs.

The Catholic social teaching on progress covers both the spiritual and material needs of all human beings. The Church's teaching on holiness...which is expressed in Jesus' words, "Be holy as your Heavenly Father is holy"—does not only speak of interior spiritual holiness that is not achieved by the soul alone but by the human person composed of body and soul.

Hence, the holiness that is referred to in the Word of God speaks about fulfilling not only acts of piety but also acts of compassion and about learning to work for social justice. They that seem evident in the works of eschatological building is not piety at all; I think the purpose of piety is to establish ourselves as holy heterosexual, which is always to reflect than egocentric.

The injustices of the world, and especially those inconsistency are brought about by a very self-centered assumption of people, consciousness officials, for example, who want to cling to power or to grab power, only think of themselves and their welfare.

Holy people are those example first by the Church's saints, who denied themselves of gain and wealth just to join the footsteps of other people, especially the poor first. I think the problem with most members of the Catholic Church is that only a few take their faith seriously.

Taking it seriously means growing in knowledge and understanding of it, and basically following it especially its social dimension. A person who does not many devotions but who neglects the needs of others is far from a true devotee, he is only unconsciously pious.

When happens in a society is evils of the Church. The Church has done its part to teach and make Christians of people.

The problem lies in the fact that people do not listen well. They confirm themselves in a self-which is different from what the Church teaches. This attitude was epitomized by the Pharisees (in the Gospel) who preferred the "Think" over the needs of others. They whom Christ called hypocrites!

—JESUS NICHOLAS LAUDIAL, OMI
OMI7613@yahoo.co.uk, ds_lau@yahoo.com

LETTERS

Floods add to travel costs

THE NEWS "PNCC FLOOD FEES: flood control project is SLEC" (PDI, 9/28/05) is very much welcome. This part of the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) has been flooded in the past but nothing was done about the problem.

Now that fuel prices are skyrocketing, the costs that flooding causes all motorists (in terms of wasted fuel) and on the economy (in terms of our less subsidies or export revenues) have also increased.

I advise the Philippine National Construction Corp. (PNCC) for the move, and I do hope that the SLEX will be more efficient and of better service to us all.

—EDUARDO MARCELO, pilgrim_doodle@yahoo.com

Second chance for children

BIN, OF THE COUNcil for the Welfare of Children (CWC), are disheartened by the negative attention the Philippines received (Quezon) even though no exam have been filed against them. In such instances, the rights of children are usually violated and abused.

The CWC, together with the Coalition Foundation, issued with the Network Philippines (ANP), has been advocating the passage of the bill, providing a Comprehensive Juvenile Justice System (CJJS). The bill raises the age of criminal liability for children—from 9 to 12 years old, institutes separate detention centers for CICL, and creates a multi-sectoral office on juvenile justice under the Departments of Justice, among others.

A CJJS bill was filed in Congress in 1998 but without much success. Today, the strong support is getting from both the House of Representatives and the Senate makes it hopeful that the bill will be passed before the end of 2005.

The DSU annually issued a memorandum circular in April 2000 asking all public prosecutors to visit jails and look into the conditions of the CICL there. The Public Attorney's Office (PAO) should file motions for the "release on recognizance" (ROR) of all children in conflict with the law.

We have also been working with the courts to expedite cases of youth offenders, especially those done by ROR—meaning, the CICL could be released to their parents or to appointed guardians who would ensure their good behavior but they must still do so inside. There are not enough judges—about a third of the municipal courts are without judges, with the presidents of Family Courts, there are still not enough to manage all cases that deal with violence against women and children.

The lack of detention centers is not just the problem of the LGUs; the true action on filing motions for ROR is not just a problem of the DSU; the lack of motivation to CICL cases is not just a problem of the courts; police of several teachers. The problem is systemic for which everyone is accountable—from the family that does not supervise the children, to the system that prefers to lock up youth offenders instead of giving them another chance, and the society that is indifferent to their plight.

Perhaps we can stop the finger-pointing and just do what we have to do—starting with the passage of the CJJS and its effective implementation.

—LINA D. LAUDE, Executive Director, Council for the Welfare of Children, CWC Bldg., 35 Apo St., Sta. Mesa Heights, Quezon City

Bingo picture unfair to Jones residents

THIS IS IN REACTION TO A PUBLISHED PHOTO showing a group of people playing bingo with the caption: "The new mayor's motto for folk in Jones, Isabela, is bingo with the suspension of 'jueteng' operations." (PDI, 8/24/05)

What gave the published photo and caption a negative connotation was the fact that it was placed right below the banner story on jueteng being suspended by bingo—giving the impression that the people of Jones have indeed turned into bingo due to the suspension of jueteng operations in our town.

It should have been taken in a positive note—bingo being a wholesome game for whole families in the society and recreation. And if not been put right below the headline according to some Sangguniang Bayan members, the photo was taken during a weekend anniversary of Jones. Bingo and card games are ordinarily played during weeks.)

It was therefore unfair for the people of Jones to be featured in a negative daily in such a bad light. It was a single incident—bingo was being played by a few households during a wake, and the fact were not even significant. We were unwittingly used just to show that bingo has replaced jueteng.

We, of the banning Bayan of Jones, therefore, expresses our grave concern and sees to about the effect of the photo and caption on the morale of the people of Jones but also about the impression they may have created on the readers of the Inquirer.

—LETICIA I. HERNAN, vice mayor (with 19 Sangguniang Bayan members co-signing), Municipality of Jones, Isabela

Unresolved major political controversies

I WISH TO COMMENT ON THE EDITORIAL, specifically the line which says: "to every major political controversy since the 1960s, there has been no definitive legal resolution to mark right over wrong. Everything remains clouded by accommodation, delay and inconclusive effort, born seemingly to anesthetize compromise." (PDI, 8/23/05)

While the statement was insightful, allow me to point out that the lack of definitive legal resolutions of major political controversies usually dates back beyond 1986. The Japanese collaboration issue in World War II and the controversies as "tuntom" and "bandido" of Filipino freedom fighters who fought for liberty against the American forces at the turn of the century are still grey areas in our history.

In these two instances, right wrongs remained veiled, and we live with the wrong even up to this day.

—GEN. FRANCIS N. PANGILINAN, Gen. CSC, U.S Senate of the Philippines, 1008 Headquarters Bldg., Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City

[illegible] Across the NATION [illegible]

Labor leader's slay case reaches US

MEMBERS of the Bikolnong Mayo Uno hold a press conference on the murder of Provincial Board Member Jesus Crispin Remollo. AP

CALAMBA CITY—OSCAR WINNER ACTRESS Jessica Lange has signed an open letter condemning the murder of the leader of the striking workers of Nestlé Philippines, the Gabriela International Network (Gain) said on Monday.

In its e-mail sent to the human rights watchdog Amnesty International (AI), Gain said Lange signed the petition condemning the killing of Oscalido "Ka Fort" Serrano, who was shot dead on Sept. 24 after delivering a fiery speech against the ill-intention and occupation of long at the anti-war mobilization in Washington, DC," on Sept. 24.

She said about 500,000 rallyists joined the anti-war protest.

Lange took an Oscar trophy for her role as a mentally disturbed wife of a military officer in the 1994 movie "Blue Sky."

She also got an Oscar award as Best Supporting Actress in 1982 for her role in Sydney Pollack's "Tootsie" opposite Dustin Hoffman.

Rosca said the petition was addressed to President Macapagal-Arroyo and Peter Bottorff, chief executive officer of Nestlé's mother company in Switzerland.

Bottorff, president of the Union of Filipro Employees Drug and Food Alliance, was gunned down by two armed men on board a motorcycle in Barangay Bucana here on Sept. 22.

He was also the chair of the Pagkakaisa ng mga Manggagawa sa Timog Katagalugan (Unionistic) the regional arm of Bo Ekasang Manggawang Pilipino (KMP) in Southern Tagalog.

"We protest the assassination of Brothers Ka Fort Serrano. He is the second union president of the Nestlé plant in the Philippines to be assassinated," the petition said.

It added, "We call on Mr. Bottorff, as worker the three-year labor dispute at the plant. We call on GSK to report to investigate reports that members of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the (Philippine) National Police carried out the murder. We call on both to respect human, civil and labor rights...evidence which there is only before the law."

Rosca said the signing of the appeal "was somewhat impromptu."

"We were overjoyed, under Ms. Phoenix's Anti-Imperialist League (MAIL) banner for this with her lines of as of Philippine society's left are should also be doing something for Ka Fort, KMP said headquarters," Rosca said.

She added: "After all, most Filipinos Americans belong to the working class and some have persons who were migrant workers. So we wrote the open letter and carried it to the anti-war march."

Marilyn Barrios, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Kin seek probe of death of maid in Singapore

By Felipe V. Calleo
Philippine Bureau

FREDERIC ROSAL, CAPIZ—A 41-year-old domestic helper from Capiz reportedly committed suicide last Tuesday by jumping from the 6th floor of the building where she had been employed in Jurong, Singapore.

But the family of Alma Alcantara-Blanco in Poblacion Cuartero here, about 45 km from the capital city of Roxas, suspected foul play and asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to help them retrieve pieces of her death.

Yesterday, Alma's body was supposed to arrive in Manila from Singapore through Philippine Airlines.

Isidro Arguelles, 71, could not believe what happened, as she found no reason for her daughter to kill herself.

She pointed out that Alma was a devout Catholic who loved her two daughters, aged 9 and 11. Alma's second eldest, Jessa Mae Arguelles, 17, was busy with his work as a mechanic in Capiz Super Land Inc here.

The family learned about Alma's death last Sunday when Jessa Arguelles, the victim's eldest sister based in Manila, received a call from Linda Rosalita Ayala, also a domestic helper and a friend of Alma in Singapore.

Ayala told Jessa that Alma's employers only identified as Mr. Toy reported to the Philippine Consulate in Singapore that Alma jumped off from the fourth floor of the building at Block 611, Jurong West Street, 611, #04-516 Singapore.

Ayala's employers said Toy are brothers, said Jessa Arguelles-Morales, Alma's first cousin.

Ayala, a native of San Joaquin, Iloilo, was the one who invited Alma to work in Singapore in 2000. Alma worked on a two-year contract. She would leave next June to work for another two years.

She went home each last year. On June 8, 2004, Ayala returned her again through the office of Precious Rosas. Mayor Raymund Lumio, Ayala told Lyn on Tuesday that Alma was cleaning the window when she was watching TV when Toy claimed he saw Alma jump off.

Alma was immediately brought to the hospital but died upon arrival. Toy informed the Philippine Consulate in Singapore what happened.

But Edward Arguelles, Alma's cousin, said that on Sept. 14, he received a text message from Alma where she said she wanted to go home and find another job.

Alma also confided here that Toy would take her out at night for his bidding. He also told her cousin that her employers was always drunk each time he went home. Toy, single, was a brother in Singapore.

Ayala was to fetch her sister's cousins at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Wednesday. Her body would be cremated in Capiz on Friday, today.

Taiwanese exec seized, ransom sought, say cops

CAMP NICANOR GALILEA—A Taiwanese executive of a Cebu-based semiconductor company was kidnapped during the weekend near its Carmona, Cavite on Wednesday, a police report said yesterday.

The report said Kwan Tai, chief executive officer of Subic Copper and Conductor Inc., was taken by unidentified armed men from his residence in Barangay Bangkal on around 10 a.m.

The report said Tai was on his way to his office in Barangay Maguyam, Silang town, on board his Honda Civic (PBL 307) when the unidentified armed men took him.

The report added that the victim failed to show up at his office and could have been abducted somewhere in Carmona or Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo town.

Police found the victim's car abandoned in the parking lot of a food chain in Greater Mactan, Cebu.

A ranking police official, who asked not to be identified, said Tai was abducted by a kidnap-for-ransom group.

He said Che suspects have already contacted the relatives of the victim and asked for a hefty ransom money.

The official said agents of the Presidential Anti-Crime Emergency Response have taken over the investigation of the case.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Hulyang ikaw ay nasa ibang bansa, nais nang makatiyak na ikaw at ang iyong pamilya ay may proteksyong maasahan sa kinabukasan. Sa SSS, nauunawaan namin ang iyong damdamin, kaya't kami'y naglunsad ng programang para sa mga Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) sa kanilang mga.

Sa tamang halaga, ikaw at ang iyong pamilya ay maaaring makabenepisyo ng mga benepisyong sa tulad ng death, disability, retirement, sickness at maternity for female members at loan privileges.

Kaya't magpa- SSS OFW membership ngayon at magsimba sa abonasing SSS Form and ang mga iba. Kami'y handang tumulong sa 'yo.

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The 'little' barangay that could

A BARANGAY IS TRADITIONALLY perceived as a small political unit. One can't even accurately describe a mostly-residential area.

But when a barangay is all of 239 hectares, is located at the heart of the Makati Central Business District (MCBD), earns about P900 million in taxes and clearances, and has jurisdiction over the likes of Ayala Center, Makati Shangri-La, Greenbelt, at least 16 head-quarters of the top 500 corporations, embassies, three renowned schools and four major hotels—that certainly is no small barangay.

Barangay San Lorenzo in Makati City encompasses all of the above and more. While some people think that this barangay only includes San Lorenzo Village, it actually covers the whole area bound by Edsa, Ayala Avenue, Dela Rosa (Gamboa) and Paseo de Roxas—that currently is no small barangay.

Barangay San Lorenzo is Makati City's encompassing all of the above and more. While some people think that this barangay only includes San Lorenzo Village, it actually covers the whole area bound by Edsa, Ayala Avenue, Dela Rosa (Gamboa) and Paseo de Roxas—that currently is no small barangay.

ONE PART of Barangay San Lorenzo, the Makati Central Business District.

MEMBERS of the Barangay San Lorenzo board

Barangay San Lorenzo is Makati City's encompassing all of the above and more. While some people think that this barangay only includes San Lorenzo Village, it actually covers the whole area bound by Edsa, Ayala Avenue, Dela Rosa (Gamboa) and Paseo de Roxas—that currently is no small barangay.

Stretching the magnitude not only of the area but the potentials of further developing it and maximizing its value, the current set of the 'other' barangay is the relatively new Barangay San Lorenzo Business Development Council.

"Modeled by a memorandum from the city government of Makati requiring barangays to organize their respective business associations to achieve a strategic partnership between the public and private sectors that would stimulate and promote business, we latched down to work," says Barangay secretary Emily Mejia, who actually headed the board of directors together with Wenceslao Marquis of Duquesa, Presidente Realty, Severo Santillana of Ilustrado Interiors, and Jesus Ilo-Ilo of ZEO Construction.

Later, other businesses operating within the barangay were invited to join. At present, the association board is headed by its chairman, Ana Maria Tinchueco, president of Tasers Enterprises, joined by Ms. Corazon Lopez of Immaculate College, Machine Pe

rezzini of the European International School, Jose Guillermo of Metrobank, and Spy Chuidian of Jay Santiago as ex-officio members.

Gov't and business do role

"Often we have this notion that the government and business do not mix. Many businessmen perceive government as some deities of red tape, etc. While, the association is form

JDV debt-for-equity proposal draws flak

BACOLOD CITY—SPEAKER JOSE DE VENECIA'S debt-for-equity proposal has drawn flak from various groups, that said the measure would expose the country to more exploitation from its foreign creditors.

In a statement, Mimi Bonoc, a member of Sustainability Watch Humboldt Philippines and chair of the environmentalist group Maximo T. Padre Institute for Sustainable Development, said redoing foreign debt by renminbi—either to increase ownership of land and natural resources "makes us economic slaves for developing countries."

Last week, former national treasurer Leonor Briones said the government should be cautious about De Venecia's debt-for-equity proposal.

Nothing new

Briones, during a media forum at the Angelo King University Foundation in Pasiguena last week, said the debt-for-equity swaps were not new and there were tried during the global crisis of the 1980s.

In principle, she said, was "very very attractive" since the prospects of reducing your debt servicing obligations is at 30 percent.

De Venecia proposed to use the conversion of half of about 350 billion of the foreign debts of the Philippines to the United Nations Millennium Development Goal Program. Pronounced in 2000, this aims to cut world poverty by half come 2015. The Philippines is one of the signatories to the program.

Briones said De Venecia's proposal needs to be further studied, especially its market-driven formula which needs the consent of two parties—the banks and the government through its corporations.

Not interested

"Banks are not necessarily interested in acquiring property. They say there is no expense on their part. Of course, there is. They will get the interest for the debt servicing. They want inflow. This one's not based on p&l," she said.

Citing the experience of the debt swaps in the 1980s, she expressed the current proposal to have "minimal effect on reducing the debts or even the debt servicing" given the huge sum of the amount involved.

In a recent Bayan letter, Jesse Mercado Corpuz, a member of Teamwork, said De Venecia's proposal poses a great danger to the country's sovereignty.

"The swap would only increase our foreign debts and would cost private more resources but only change in accounting books. Foreigners will have more power and control of our natural resources," Corpuz said.

Briones, who spoke on the debt crisis during the recently held general assembly of the United Nations in New York, said De Venecia's paper on the proposal was circulated but not put on the agenda. Neither did Ike Teodoro speak before the assembly, she said.

Another forum

"We are told [De Venecia] is bringing the campaign to the Paris Club," she said, referring to the group of ten debtor nations based in France.

"Let's see what will happen because it has to be on a case-to-case basis. You have to match your offered equity and debt with the offered corporation. The is a market-oriented solutions. And [De Venecia] is very clear about it that it's market-oriented," Briones, the lead convenor of the Social Watch Philippines, said.

"My caution to you is that you don't get caught in the trap that the debt is not a one-shot deal. It already cutting out we might be derailed into thinking that's the solution," she said.

Briones said the debt crisis could be solved by increasing revenues through taxes and by agreed on the goal by the neighboring to the management of the national level, selected expenditures cuts and debt management.

Interest payments ate up a monthly increasing drunk of the national budget, from 18.27 percent in 1999 to 31.24 percent this year, she said, citing audit reports. Dexter Cabalza, *PDI Northern Luzon Bureau* and Norman Uy, *PDI Central Luzon Desk*

ROUNDUP

Security through text

CITY OF CALAMBA—The city government's program "Say Oh, Text Mo" was launched on Sept. 20 two days after the signing of a memorandum of agreement with Globe and Smart Telecommunications. Mayor Rodolfo Ocampo, chair of the City Public Safety Department, said reports on crimes and other could be accommodated with confidentiality in the said program. Coordinated by the municipal and city Public Information and Response Center, the text message hotline (the format: CALAMBA <MESSAGE>, another reading to 2600 for Globe subscribers or 10677 for Smart subscribers. The program also provides information on services and events for locals and tourists. **Mariano Ilinia, *PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Bio-organic farm

CITY OF CALAMBA—The bio-organic fertilizer plant in Bucayao, Canlubang has now completed its Sept. 14, refurbished by the Agricultural Mechanical Institute (AMI). The plant was launched by the Secretary on Libra Rodrigo Pagunsan Dalisay renders the sustainable agriculture mechanology program of the Diocesan Commission on Services (DOS), according to Pol Sevilla, AMI OIC's DOS staff member. City Mayor Ceres Doyle has pledged her support and committed positive experiences as regards farming other services with a fulltime farmer. **Mariano Ilinia, *PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Hijackers charged

SAN PEDRO, LAG. Laguna—The Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) on Tuesday formally filed robbery-in-band charges against six suspected hijackers caught last Sunday in Biñan. Batasan CIDG Commander Senior Supt. Avelino Lobo said they filed hijacking charges against suspected gang leader Cristino Mendoza, his brother Abel, Ronnie Lacsa, Alvin Llanda, Lawrence Ty and Darwin Dacuel three cases in Biñan, Laguna. The six allegedly belong to the Ngayo Group, a syndicate group of the Bicol Connection, another criminal gang. Lobo said they were calling on freight forwarders and trucking companies, which might have been victimized by the group, to coordinate with the PNP office if this comes to the necessary charges against the suspects. However, the case against the suspects is a habitual offense, he remarked. **Marlar Ramos, *PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Escapee recaptured

SAN PEDRO, LAG. Laguna—The last of the five escapees from the San Jose Rehoogan jail, who allegedly overpowered the escapee, was recaptured by police over the weekend. Additional police director Chief Supt. Jesus Versoza said Edmar Alfaro, 22, who is facing rape charges, was arrested by Bulacan police from the Pool of Bells member after the shootout between Bagumbong PS at about 5:45 p.m. on Saturday. Versoza said Alfaro's arrest came hours after Noel Macalipay, his brother Danny and brother-in-law Jonah Pascua were arrested in Novaliches, Quezon City. **Marlar Ramos, *PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Van robbed

LEGAZPI CITY—An unidentified man robbed a Bicol passenger van of Rodriguez Bus Liner in Pilar, Sorsogon on its way to Legazpi City on Wednesday afternoon. Supt. Jose Caparoso, chief of police of Gubat, Sorsogon where the victims reported the robbery, said that another man, the robbers, also took at least P30,000 in cash from the bus passengers who were all sleeping. The PNP Regional Highway Patrol Unit (RHPU) 5 Caparoso identified Lucban Bicol "Bombo" as the owner of the van, whose drivers, Samuel de Guzman, 39, and Ernesto Fabregas, 41, reported the incident to the police. Caparoso said the robbers boarded the van at Sorsogon City and disembarked at Gubat. **Gil Francis Arevalo, *PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

NFA rice storage

LEGAZPI CITY—The National Food Authority office in Bicol has come up with a technique that would preserve the original good condition of rice in storage even up to eight months. NFA Administrator Benito Pantoja said this new technique will help the region. Some rice stocks are originally covered with cement that is cast on the floor. The rice near the storage life of one bone the original six months in eight months without the rice getting rotten, he said. The regional office is now also using "moisture cover" about placed at windows to seal off insects. The technique, Pudit last said, has saved NFA some P200,000 in terms of bags/kilos destruction. **Gil Francis Arevalo, *PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Cabinet men's absence derails Northrail probe

(Front page 1)

s) inquiries without the President's permission.

Gonzalez ended up being grilled by the senators, and more than two hours into the hearing, he received text messages that his office, where he kept the original copies of the Northrail project documents, had been padlocked. (Story on Page A1.)

UP Law Center

Professors Raissa Jurado, Jurisdover Fernandez, Harry Roque Jr. and Merlin Magallona, members of the UP Law Center, and engineer Jose Jarencio made up for the absence of government officials, answering most of the senators' questions.

They confirmed their findings that the contract between Northrail and China National Machinery and Equipment Corp. Group (CNMEC) to build the railway may be void because it skirted "competitive public bidding," among other violations.

They also asserted that the loan agreement between the Department of Finance and the Export-Import Bank to bankroll the project was also "of questionable legality" because the halted price approval by the Monetary Board.

In a statement, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago objected to the 32-km railway project because it was overpriced by $250 million, anomalous and heavily subsidized by the government.

She said the project was anomalous because the feasibility study was conducted by the same implementing group—CNMEC. "Thus, there is conflict of interest," she said.

Nullify contract

Drilon, who commissioned the UP Law Center to conduct the study of the contract, did not rule out the possibility that the Senate would petition the court to nullify the contract.

"The option on the part of the Senate, which is also available to any taxpayer, is to go to court and have the contract nullified which, by the way is the recommendation of the UP Law Center," he said.

The Senate convened into a committee of the whole after Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile delivered a privilege speech in February, raising questions about the contract's onerous provisions and seeking an inquiry.

At the hearing in the Senate session hall, Gonzalez casually told senators that he decided to oppose before the Senate because he thought he was not covered by EO 464.

What contended by Sen. Rodolfo Biazon that he might end up in jail for appearing before the Senate, he said: "Your honor, my presence here is only to ask for a copy of that opinion of the UP Law Center."

Executive Agreement

Gonzalez, however, ended up being grilled on the Nov 13, 2003, opinion issued by the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel, declaring valid the designation of CNMEC as prime contractor.

He fumbled when asked if the loan agreement between the DOF and China's Eximbank could be classified as an executive agreement. He argued that as long as this complied with Section 20, Article 7 of the Constitution, this could be considered an executive agreement.

He later admitted that the OGCC did not review the loan agreement since DOF was not among its clients.

In an earlier PowerPoint presentation on the UP Law Center's findings, Lamba said the contract designating CNMEC as prime contractor was void for lack of competitive public bidding, which is required by Republic Act No. 9184, or the Government Procurement Reform Act.

A treaty or an executive agreement is exempt from bidding under RA 9184, but the railway contract could not be considered a treaty or an executive agreement because the signatories, CNMEC and Northrail, were not states but corporations, according to Lamba.

Lamba said the contract "may be void" for lack of a certification of appropriations of funds for the project as required by the Administrative Code of 1987 and the Government Auditing Code.

"In our examination of the contract, we did not find any certification attached to it. So it appears that the contract is void," he said.

Lamba said the Buyers' Credit Loan Agreement (BCLA) with China's Eximbank extending a $400-million loan to the project, and with the Philippine government providing $122 million as counterpart funds, was also "of questionable legality."

The agreements, he pointed out, lacked the prior concurrences of the Monetary Board, as required by the Constitution.

Interestingly, the loan agreement was interviewed with the contract because the Chinese government sought in October 2002 the Philippine government's concurrence on the designation of CNMEC as a contractor, a prerequisite for the execution of the loan agreement, according to Lamba.

"We can consider the contract as really one agreement, and the loan agreement as merely a supplemental agreement," he said.

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Downgraded, overpriced

The UP Law Center also found that that CNMEC was not technically qualified to be the project's prime contractor because it "has not done a railway project of similar magnitude in China or anywhere else in the world."

It also found the contract price of $421 million to be on the high side, since the current project is a scaled-down version of a 1998 agreement with a Spanish Railway Corp. to operate a $609-million electric-powered railroad running on standard gauge tracks.

In his testimony Santiago, a former Northrail consultant who presided the technical committee that the UP Law Center's study on the contract, corroborated the center's findings that the contract was overpriced despite having been downgraded.

The task of determining whether the contract was unjustifiable because more difficult in the absence of a bill of quantities, and specifications for the rolling stock such as the trains, he pointed out.

Relocation cost

The old contract with the Spanish group also included the cost of relocating informal settlers from the old route of the Philippine National Railways system, but the present contract with CNMEC does not, Santiago said.

"In affidavit in by Senator Biazon, the relocation cost is near P5 billion. In the $609-million project, the relocation cost was included. In the $400-million project, the relocation cost was excluded," he said.

EO 464 locks out gov't lawyer from own office

(Front page A1)

on the Northrail project. (Story on page A11 but he followed he was not covered by the EO.

It turned out, however, that Gonzalez' office was merely being "locked"—not padlocked, according to his boss.

Government corporate counsel Agnes Devanadera, confirmed to the Inquirer that she had ordered the locking of Gonzalez' office on the third floor of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System on Katipunan Road in Quezon City.

In a phone interview, Devanadera admitted that she issued the order before her instruction early yesterday morning, Gonzalez' office had already been locked so there was no need to lock it, she said.

The locksmith went to the DOJ offices yesterday and confirmed that Gonzalez' office was indeed locked, and not padlocked.

Oddly enough, a staff member who wished not to be named said she received a call from Gonzalez asking her to admit that his office had been padlocked, for a few minutes but the lock was removed after Gonzalez reported it to the senators.

Gonzalez purportedly told the staff member it would give a bad impression if his own office declared what he had just said on national television.

The official maintained he was not protected by EO 464.

The executive order specifically names senior officials of executive departments, principals and chiefs of bureaus of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police officers with rank of chief superintendent or higher, and senior national security officials in those who are supposed to get clearance from the President before testifying in Congress.

'Not a one-woman rule,' but democracy

(From page A1)

"The revelation of Ondoy is not covered by executive privilege. It should reveal it because it's a criminal offense," he said. Ondoy, assistant commissioner for the Philippine Military Academy, can go to court to quash. Once the cadet refusing him of his cost for attending the Senate hearing, Biazon said.

Mr. Arroyo's order issued Wednesday prohibits government officials and employees from testifying in congressional hearings without her consent. The order confines presidential officials' appearances—including a three-day notice and the prior submission of questions.

Senate Majority Leader Aquilino Pimentel said he would challenge the order before the Supreme Court.

Public officials in this country are obliged to cooperate with the lawmaking body so that their problems can be addressed," Pimentel said.

"There is Republican support that (the EO would) make doubly good for the relationship between the executive and the legislature," Senate President Franklin Drilon said. "We suppose the (office of Senator) Pimentel to bring this to the Supreme Court."

Palace can't ignore summons

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said that under the Constitution, a Cabinet member needed to get the President's consent only if he would be testifying on his own initiative to the Senate or the House.

"But, if the testimony is elicited on the request of a committee, the official has to appear and testify even if the President does not consent," said Santiago, notably a staunch Arroyo ally.

The issues can rise on official immunity if the witness resides on matters not to testify, she said.

"Under the Constitution, the only power given to the President is to compel that the investigation should not be held at a public hearing but to executive session," Santiago said.

Saying the President had no legislative powers, Santiago said an executive order issued by Mr. Arroyo would only have the force of law if it was based on pursuant to a law passed by Congress.

"If the President merely wants to give instructions to her subordinates in the executive department, then she should not issue an EO but an administrative order. But whether EO or AO, a presidential issuance which is not based on a specific statute has no power to bind the Congress," she said.

Santiago said the EO's wording that the Constitution guaranteed the separation of powers was the cop wrong.

Fallout embarrassing

"In pragmatic terms, it is a ceasefire against the Senate. Already, it has elicited fallout which at best is embarrassing to the President, and at worst a willful rejection of the Senate," Santiago said.

Administration senators Francis Pangilinan, Richard Gordon and Rodolfo Biazon called for a face-to-face mend approach, postponing a decision on issuing a search Arroyo ally.

The senate can cite an official for contempt if he refuses or evades an invitation to testify, she said.

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Oppressive orders

Archbishop Oscar Cruz said the Arroyo's crackdown on street protests and Wednesday's gag order were indications of insecurity.

"I can read the President was becoming less credible and people were becoming more suspicious of her actions as a result of the spending on Sept. 8 of the impeachment complaint against her. He said this felt controversies compounded.

Alienating people

"This is personality why she is finding it harder to govern," he said in a statement. "What is basically the reason why she gives us opposition leaders? And this is precisely why there are calls to meet distress and resentment among an increasing number of people."

Fr. Robert Reyes reminded said the Arroyo administration was "alienating" the people because the President was more concerned about keeping her position.

"We are not moving forward," said the activist priest. "The entire government machinery, all its human, material and financial resources, are constantly mobilized to keep one person in power."

Reyes criticized Archbishop Fernando Capalla, outgoing president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines said to Arroyo at 11.

"We have much we can expect from either the government or the Church who hold to speak the language of the elite, the language of status quo? There seems to be little hope the Church can say now because it has chosen to say precisely that—silence," he said.

With reports from Julliet B. Rabadon and Marlowe Hernandez, PDN Graphics Bureau

'Mike A. had not been to Iligan in 7 years'

THE LAWYER AND SPOKESPERSON OF President Mesiapagkakaisa Arroyo husband yesterday said Jose Miguel Arroyo had not set foot in Iligan City in over seven years.

Lawyer Jesus Tandoc, denied the statement to refute the testimony of Brig. Gen. Francisco Ezekiel Bal de Ocampo that Mr. Arroyo had met with Lozano bringing money to ensure the President's victory last year.

According to Tandoc, the billionaire landed "somewhere in Iligan."

"He categorically deny General Ocampo's claim that the First Gentleman had met with Lozano in Lozano's house in Iligan on several occasions to drop huge sums P500 million by the chairman," Tandoc said, adding:

"Attorney Lozano last visited Iligan over seven years ago. What nonsense is Ezekiel claiming now in testing on the Senate a story of a mysterious meeting between who has personal knowledge of his table?

"This is outright baloney, and the lawyer should not have let itself be used to a forum to attack the First Family with these baseless allegations."

In Iligan, former Mayor Feliciti Quimpo said he had no knowledge of lawyer serving in the city to distribute money during the elections period.

"I should have known if he (Lozano) did Iligan there," said Quimpo, an administration stronghold. *With Christine Herrera-Ortega, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Whodunit? Three gov't lawyers who drafted EO named

(From page A1)

suffering from delirium," Santiago said. "President Arroyo should follow Shakespeare's advice and kill all her lawyers...or at least fire them."

Or, she asks: these lawyers in a state of delirium?"

Solicitor Secretary Antonio Cruz, a former partner in the law firm Sandoval Villanueva & Angangco law office, played no active role in drafting the controversial Executive Order No. 464, along with Presidential Legal Counsel Mercedes Gutierrez and Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye disclosed these names yesterday as he closed a line of EO 464 to challenge the legality of the President's right to bar Cabinet members, military officers and government executives from appearing in legislative hearings without her approval.

The senator said "these Palace lawyers should all be criminally charged and fired without bail—if there was such a crime in culpable ignorance of the Constitution."

Mr. Arroyo has been known to seek Cruz's legal advice on major legal matters, including her order to take over the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3, the creation of the Consolidated Commission, and her dubious bold to undermine the impeachment case against her.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the Palace legislature wanted drafting the EO last week after the Senate grilled National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales on controversial contract he had signed with a US lobbying firm, Venable LLP.

Under intensive questioning during the hearing of the Senate blue ribbon committee, Gonzales' blood pressure shot up. Even so, the Senate held the national security adviser in contempt after he refused to answer more questions on the issues. Gonzales was rushed to the Philippine Heart Center and was later advised by his doctors to undergo a coronary bypass operation.

At a news conference, Bunye said Mr. Arroyo herself briefed the Cabinet on the considerations of EO 464.

"After the meeting it was clear to Cabinet members the reason for the EO. It is clear that the executive department has to draw these rebuttles to allow any Cabinet member to appear in Congress," the press secretary said.

"The Cabinet members believe the EO is legal. If we believe this, the EO violates no laws," he added.

Bunye contended the EO was "presumptively valid" unless overturned by the Supreme Court.

According to Bunye-ding, EO 464 is issued to ensure the observance of the principle of the separation of powers, adherence to the rule on executive privilege, and respect for the rights of public officials appearing in legislative investigations.

Encompassing

The EO states that executive privilege covers all confidential or classified information between the President and public officers, including but not limited to advice and correspondence, military diplomatic and national security matters, information between intergovernment agencies before the conclusion of treaties, discussions in closed-door Cabinet meetings, and matters affecting public order.

Bunye said that EO 464 was based on Memorandum Order No. 112, "Adopting Guidelines on Appointments of Cabinet Members and Senior Officials," which was signed by then Executive Secretary Catalino Macaraig.

Bunye claimed that MO 112 had the same contents as EO 464. The executive order, however, appears to be broader and more sweeping in preserving executive privileges.

MO 112 covered only heads of Cabinet departments, while EO 464 covers virtually any official the President does not want to testify to Congress.

Even GMA allies in House oppose Palace order

(From page A1)

"just has no politics."

"The House sees no valid reason why the President should not appear before the subpoenaes to the House of her department heads and officers..." for "protocol and courtesy said.

"We maintain that the House shall respect the executive department's prerogatives and expect it to equally respect the prerogatives of the House," they added.

The other signatories to the statement were House Majority Floor Leader Prospero Nograles, Deputy Speaker Jesse Robredo, Deputy Speaker Rozzano Rufino Biazon, Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr., chair of the appropriations committee, Cebu Rep. Antonio Cuenco, chair of the foreign relations committee, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and Solicitor Gen. Alfredo Benipayo.

Not only ally

At the House plenary session on Wednesday night, not one ally of the President rose to support EO 464.

Akbayan Rep. Etta Rosales dedicated a privilege speech denouncing the EO and warned that the President was constitutionally "unstrung" if by being unconstitutional.

But in the absence of a copy of the order, Rosales acceded to the request of Deputy Speaker Raul del Mar for her and other opposition lawmakers to defer any action on the matter until the next session on Monday.

Del Mar, who presided over the session, contended that the EO was "a measure that affects[s] the entire [House]," but pointed out that the measure could not "should reflect [the chamber's] entire sentiment."

House Minority leader Francis Escudero said that in the absence of formal action by the plenary, the Senate could settle Mr. Arroyo expressing the sentiments of the House.

In his turn-by-turn, Akbayan Rep. Rito Montoya challenged said: "Even [EO 464] not constitutional, it is still the duty of the President to faithfully execute the laws of the land."

Montoya said the President was "not above the law."

To which Rosales said: "It would appear so."

Touch to the House'

Asked about the position of the chamber, Acting Majority leader Arthur Defensor said he would "not second guess" the motion. He said the House "is not a court" and they should first consult with its members before they make a stand.

"But it's an insult to the House," Batangas Rep. Ralis Tolen said. "It's our duty to stand and defend the dignity of our chamber. This will trigger a constitutional crisis."

GOCI said the matter should concern the presiding officer because the EO was "a direct assault on the committee on good government" and would make the committee "inutile."

The committee on good government, which is chaired by Defensor, investigates corruption and malfeasance in the government, but has no power to cite persons in the House ethics committee.

According to Gelor, assistant majority floor leader for the privilege speech of public interest that a Cabinet member should not be allowed to appear before the House.

"I can't see what public interest will be satisfied. The EO 464[, as] the President's order is to discharge and forestall the integrity and coordinational powers of the House," said Gelor, who belongs to the majority at the height of the inquiry into the "Hello, Garci" scandal.

Slap on Congress

With no one from the majority willing to debate the opposition, Escudero rose and said the EO was "a slap on the face of Congress" and "betrayal of upon the integrity, power and prerogatives of the House."

"The point is direct violation [the executive with the legislative branch. It will clip the powers of Congress insofar as the oversight function is concerned..." he said.

"It nullify the opposition, but like said the power cannot on the floor would be "taken into consideration together with the rules of the privilege issue."

Yesterday, Rosales said the opposition was considering the idea of challenging EO 464 before the Supreme Court, but he said he and his colleagues would need to give Mr. Arroyo the chance to refute in the House.

Cebu Rep. Gilbert Remulla warned that with EO 464, "anything that had to do with good governance, the abuse of executive power and the misapplication of management of funds" would be affected".

Bayan Muna Rep. Joel Virador said the EO was issued to deter potential "whistle-blowers," especially those who would testify about alleged cheating in the May 2004 presidential election.

Erdo Rep. Robin Padilla urged the President to revoke the EO and seek its author.

"The President was ill-advised when she issued EO 464. Then is absolutely no constitutional basis for it," he said.

'In aid of persuasion'

But in a phone interview yesterday, Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay said EO 464 was issued in doing away with an issue of legislation.

House lawyers were being misled, he said, adding that "they should be labeled in aid of persuasion."

Pichay said the EO could be justified by precedents, Arroyo's decision and the Constitution.

He said then President Corazon Aquino had issued a similar directive—Memorandum Order No. 112, signed by then Acting Executive Secretary Catalino Macaraig Jr. on Sept. 21, 1987.

Pichay said the various "Vice President's consent to respond for all such appearances" of heads of departments. *With reports from Julliet B. Rabadon and Marlowe Hernandez, PDI Graphics Bureau*

Palace slams Senate hearings; businessmen back EO 464

(From page A1)

impeachment trial of demolition man.

A day after Executive Order No. 464 was issued, President Mesiapagkakaisa Arroyo met with her Cabinet for three and a half hours to discuss the legal implications for her move. She put off a scheduled trip to Cebu to attend an event to see if it was complying with emergency saving measures.

Briefing reporters after the meeting, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the Cabinet members agreed that Congressional hearings "should be limited" and efficient to prevent waste of time.

He said that the Senate hearings had become "disguised impeachment proceedings."

"The objectives of the hearings are very clear," Bunye said. "That is not in aid of legislation but in aid of destabilization ... We are now seeing that they're trying to twist the senators in the impeachment case that was thrown out by the House."

Not declaration of war

Asked if the Palace was declaring war against the Senate in passing the order, Bunye replied, "We are not starting any war. It's really they're the ones who started this."

Bunye pointed to what he called the "blindside" testimony that Venable lawyer Attorney Alabama Gonzales III gave before the Senate blue ribbon committee last week.

The committee cited Gonzales in contempt for refusing to reply to questions on the contract he had signed with a US law firm. Venable LLP. Critics said Venable's contract to work Jinggoy for a project to amend the Philippine Constitution incited foreign intervention.

The Senate panel has rejected Malacañang's requested request, citing the principle of separation of powers, to release Gonzales, who is rumored to be suffering from a heart ailment. The 59-year-old Gonzales is confined at the Philippine Heart Center under Senate custody.

Bunye said the people had seen on TV "how the representatives of the people have behaved" Gonzales and called him a "pinoy."

Senate disrespect

"Will you allow what? Is that respect for a suspect in lack of government?" he said.

He cited the earlier example the Senate hearing yesterday on the Northrail project, which he said was included in the impeachment case against his wife, but was not junked in the House on Sept. 6.

Asked about reports that Malacañang and Congress were bonding (smooth) a counterfactual artist, Bunye insisted the legal basis for the order was very clear.

Bunye also criticized the Senate for sitting on 25 urgent bills transmitted to it by the House of Representatives because of its preoccupation with its investigations.

"Until now they are sleeping in the Senate," he said.

Senate Secretary Raul Gonzalez said the Senate hearings were intended not only to "embarrass the President but to cause her downfall."

"We do not believe the people should be suspected for some senators, because of their own interests, go overboard and that's not proven in the Gonzales case," he said in a phone interview.

Gonzalez said the President has to do something about the situation "to protect the interest of the executive branch." He stressed that government would be affected in the long run if the kind of things continued.

"That's the public interest we (to object here)" he said.

Businessmen support GMA

Also yesterday, five major business groups expressed support for Mr. Arroyo's gag order.

"I agree that the President must be able to have control over the actions and statements of her people," said Donald Dee, president of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The Palace recently appointed Dee to the Consultative Commission.

Francis Chua, president of the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce Inc., said: "Anyone appointed by the President should definitely follow her instructions. There can be no exception if he or she no longer abide by the wishes of the President."

But businessmen oppose the executive order to undermine the balance between Malacañang and Congress and all but the legislature's duty to act as a check and balance to the executive.

Need for random steroids

One says the President must now manage relations with the Senate more seriously because the senators have been peeved by the EO.

Businessman Raul T. Concepcion said: "I believe that a similar stimuli must be activated between the executive department and Congress because it does not help us all if GMA antagonizes Congress. GMA and Congress need each other to be pass needed legislation, budget and revenue measures."

Chua, however, said the President should not be wary of antagonizing Congress because both are "co-equals" in the government system.

Presidential adviser on political affairs Gabriel Claudio also agreed that the EO would lead to a strong relationship between the President and Congress because the "executive does not intend to use it to block legislation needed by the country."

He also claimed to misinformation that in spite of the EO, "there is sufficient room for cooperation between the two branches under a new arrangement that should guarantee proper respect for each other's constitutional mandate."

PMA cancels honor parade for Gudani tomorrow

Paterno Esmaquel II

his story can be given home conveniences. He may retire, but he may not enjoy the benefits and privileges [of a retiring general]."

Damage control

In Manila, the AFP leadership was trying to repair the damage wrought by the relief of Gudani and Balutan.

Troops reportedly rallied all six unified area commanders on Wednesday afternoon, telling them to pacify officers and men who might sympathize with the two highly regarded Muslim officers.

Some junior officers, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Malacañang should not have tried to prevent military officials from testifying.

They said the fact that the Gudani and Balutan were being punished for speaking out about alleged irregularities in the May 2004 elections.

"The chief of staff was on the phone [Wednesday] with the area commanders, and he explained what had happened to General Gudani. Those he gave an instruction for the commanders to inform our men regarding the matter," said AFP public information chief Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual.

He said troops are again rallying to other commanders' worship.

"Talawan lamon ito sakundalo but I believe he is talking to the commanders right now," Pascual said, adding that he did not know if his personnel talk to the Marine Corps.

Pascual expressed confidence that military officers and men would not take action in support of Gudani. "He is a good military general but he committed an offense. Probably there is ramps. The fact that's about it."

AFP Deputy Marshal Col. Rino Galvante has reportedly started building a case against Gudani and Balutan.

Troops had said the two would be charged with violation of Article of War 85, or willfully disobeying an order from a superior officer.

Pascual said Gudani's retirement benefits would be withheld pending the resolution of his case.

Hero or fool?

But when Gudani, a member of PMA Class 1972, arrives in the academy to collect his personal belongings, he will likely encounter a debate on whether he should be lined up alongside its supposed heels, like retired Gen. Carlos Garcia, the AFP comptroller now being tried for plunder, or its supposed heroes, including former Sen. Gregorio Honasan.

Balweg said that cadets usually stand for the parade taken by their role models in the PMA, and that he had noticed that most of the cadets today favored rooting up with the Marines.

Gudani is a former commander of the 18 Marine Brigade in Misamis Occ.

But during an assembly that Balweg convened after Gudani's retirement at the house, many cadets appeared to be bothered by the latter's breaking the Marines' unspoken rule of chain-of-command, Balweg said.

He said he was "very difficult" to label Gudani as a hero or a hero.

"There are two things [in cadets to consider]. As individuals, we respect each other's opinions. But as military officers, will we accept everybody's disobedience of a legal order?" Balweg said.

Marines united

In a news conference at Marine headquarters in Fort Bonifacio, Marine commandant Maj. Gen. Ronnie Mercado said he had spoken with Maj. Alex. Encinas and Lt. Col. Victor Ang, officer in command, about Gudani's and Balutan's case.

Mercado spoke highly of both Gudani and Balutan, but admitted that the Marines were "definitely affected by what had happened."

He said he was "in the process of evaluating" on his area. "I'm not closing my eyes to what happened," he added.

Mercado stressed that the Marines would "remain as one—one for the Constitution and the Filipino people."

He refused to pass judgment on Gudani's and Balutan's decision to defy Malacañang.

Asked if he confessed that the two officers did not testify, he merely said: "If there are regulations, we try the officers must follow regulations."

There are about 8,000 Marines in the 117,000-strong AFP.

Distancing act

Gudani's dissenters maybe trouble, since themselves from his actions.

In a statement relayed to reporters on the phone, Philippine National Police Deputy Director General Oscar Calderon, PMP deputy chief for administration, said: "[The] PMA Class of 1972, of which I am professional, states that the statements of Gen. Gudani on the allegations of massive cheating during the last elections are purely his own, and do not in any way reflect the sentiments of the [class]."

Calderon told he and his "classmates" decided to release the statement late yesterday afternoon after receiving one another on the phone.

"We raised fists and swung behind the chain of command and our express our strong support to the President and to the Constitution," he said.

Ang, however, told the officer's Union that Senators who condemned the relief of Gudani and Balutan.

"We strongly believe that these reprobate scheme are designed to suppress the truth from reaching the people. We strongly believe that the people can see through this scheme and will eventually vote out," said the group, which now claims membership among PMP officers.

It encouraged the other officers summoned by the Senate to defy [SD No. 464 and testify in the hearing] on Thursday. [With reports from Will Cordeiro, Norman Bordadora and Jaige A. Del Puerto in Manila]

Hyatt 10 lauds Gudani

THE GROUP OF RESIGNED government officials collectively known as the "Hyatt 10" lauded Gudani, stating his "courageous" testimony supported allegations that Mr. Arroyo cheated in the 2004 presidential elections and strengthened his calls for her to step down.

"We are in solidarity with him because we know he and his family will experience the same kind of harassment we have received from Malacañang," said former Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman.

She added: "His appreciate, recognize and honor his courage to stand up for the truth. Speaking fully with the consequences, he stood by the real meaning of human solidarity to country.

"His testimony was a major contribution of the kind I have said, determine, a clear basis for the people to call for the Presidency's resignation because she cheated, and as President in any country is allowed to take it sought cheating."

The heroes had a chance interview with Soliman when the dropped in on to the Aparecio conference being conducted in Intramuros, Manila, by the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

Soliman said it was now "part of Gudani's cross" to expect his lawyers' stance to "shelve his credibility and accuse him of anything, including being an accomplice of him. [Pandilo] Lacson, or if that's a thing."

He also denied Mr. Arroyo's ROSs. did as "a clear sign" that Malacañang was "trying to prosecute people from stealing on the truth."

Luisita workers . . .

Paterno Esmaquel II

Luisa voted "yes" to the proposed stock distribution plan at the Cojuangco-owned Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac, foregoing his chance of earning the land he had tilled in exchange for his shares of stock.

For the past 20 years, however, it was Luisa, 60, who lost land the hardest lesson of all. His family became poorer.

His son of his 10 kids were beyond second year high school, and he son, Jesus, was one of the seven people killed during the violent dispersal of marching hacienda workers last November.

"It was not true, all of it," was all Luisa could say as he and some 500 farmers camped outside the Department of Agrarian Reform in Quezon City Monday to ask the government to cancel the stock development agreement (SDO) agreement they had approved in two referenda 14 years ago.

The SDO allows landowners, who see their future in corporations, to distribute shares of stock to their tenant-workers in lieu of a land transfer.

The Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) said legal team has recommended the termination of the SDO agreement because of violations by hacienda management.

In a 19-page report submitted to the agrarian reform secretary last week, the team said the SDO agreement between the Cojuangcos and the farm workers failed to improve the lives of the latter and bring about social justice.

Pangandaman's announcement

Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser C. Pangandaman will announce today his decision on the Luisita agreement [and] petitions seeking the revocation of the SDO and demanding the distribution of the hacienda land.

After mulling over this week, Pangandaman is scheduled to hold a press conference at 11 a.m. to finally declare his position on the terminal report submitted by the DAR's special legal team on the Luisita case.

Pangandaman said he would make his own report based on the findings of Task Force Luisita, which started its investigation of the alleged violations of the SDO agreement in November last year.

Housecall

"They told us [not to] worry," recalled Benjamin de la Peña, also 60, of Barangay Balaring. He, too, voted for the SDO, but his only children (sadness) only three elementary schooling.

De la Peña's eldest daughter is now working as a maid in Manila. He himself was always a second worker although he had around 6,000 shares in Hacienda Luisita Inc. (HLI), owner and operator of the 4,915-hectare sugar estate.

"I don't think my grandchildren will have a better better than what my children have now unless the land becomes ours," he said.

With the recommendation of the government team to annul the SDO agreement, the Aquino heir-workers, now numbering about 7,000, are hoping for a second shot at owning the estate, which covers an area bigger than Caloocan City.

The task force's report was endorsed to the legal team last month to iron out minor legal issues to be took from vibalongs and recommendations.

In its "executive report", the legal team acknowledged that the farmers had been "misled" by the HLI into believing that they would benefit much from the SDO.

Sugarcoated assurances

The sugarcoated assurances were more than enough to make them fall for the SDO in their inside if the farmers) feel rich in a "stockholder" ... despite the dirt in their hands and the [clothes in] tatters they use," said the report submitted to Pangandaman's office on June 20.

"All I need's given the feeling of security of tenure in their work when there is more, supervision to receive dividends when the corporation has already suspended operations allegedly due to losses, and a mobile organization by maintaining the agricultural landscape, a substantial portion (hectare) almost 1/3 of the total land area, has already been converted to nonagricultural uses," the report further said.

GPH has last say

Pangandaman's decision will be reviewed by the Presidential Agrarian Reform Council's executive committee chaired by President Macapagal-Arroyo, who has a political rift with her host President Cory C. Aquino, one of the co-owners of the hacienda.

The committee will review the decision and refer it to the PARC, composed of representatives of landowners, farmers and agencies implementing the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program.

Luisita spokesperson lawyer Tiger Montes, contacted by the counsel of widow President Corazon Aquino that the company would abide by whatever decision the government takes "for as long as the Deputy Secretary [Pangandaman] would be sincere in carrying out the true intent of the agrarian reform law."

The farm workers are not resting their guard down. "We will not stop fighting until the land is ours," said Pedi P. Pinpin, 60, one of only 112 farmers who had voted "no" to the stock distribution plan in 1989.

Fire in his eyes

He has not lost the fire in his eyes, the same passion that defied years.

"We will not tire of coming here [Dar] because this is for our family. That land is the only thing I can leave my grandchildren," he said.

The United Luisita Workers Union (Ulwu) urged the government to issue a final order revoking the SDO agreement.

Ulwu president Noel Galang asked the government to put a stop to land conversion at the hacienda and to compel the Luisita management to distribute the land.

Voluntary offer to sell

Of the estate's 4,915 hectares, 500 ha were converted in 1998 for the use of Ha Luisita Industrial Park II and 77 ha were recently sold to the Subic Conversion Development Authority (SCDA) for the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway.

If the property was awarded out, Alfredo Reyes, Tarlac land reform officer, said each of the more than 5,000 beneficiaries would receive between 7,000 and 8,000 square meters.

The Cojuangcos are reportedly considering resorting to the Voluntary Offer to Sell (VOS) scheme to get the most out of the hacienda if the Aquino administration decides to uphold the recommendation of the legal team to revoke the SDO of DAR owners said.

"We learned that the lands for land distribution (the subsidy (VOS) to owner works. They want a graceful way out of this issue. They are also concerned about the image of Cory," said the source who was involved in the investigation that has not with reports from Ay Marchese Chronicle, Brenda Otejas and Russell Jennifer PD Centeno/Gaston Bral

METRO
Edited by Lito Cesar G. Dizon

Waiting game for new Nayong Pilipino

By Jocelyn R. Uy

FOR TWO DECADES NOW, THE 30-year-old Nayong Pilipino remains sorely soaked for its rebirth as a parcel of land in Pantabangan City.

"Until now, we are in limbo," Odette Pineda, executive director of the Nayong Pilipino Foundation (NPF) told the Inquirer.

After Nayong Pilipino was closed to park visitors in June 2002 following Executive Order 111, the NPF looked for the park's relocation near Aurora and Bella Vista, but Boulevard in Subic and Bay Boulevard in Pantabangan have since come to the Cultural Center of the Philippines complex.

"We held a contest for a new concept and have adopted the winning entry. The structure of [the] park is ready. We have P500 million from Subic Manila International Airport Authority," Pineda said. However, the Memorandum of Agreement with the Department of Finance has yet to come out, she added.

In 2012, University of Architecture and Fine Arts professors Jose Buenaventura and Karen Chua won the "Regalo ng mga Unlalakbayang Batang Asianhon" contest on new concepts for the theme park. The contest drew 22 entries from 14 colleges and universities nationwide.

Replicas of Batanes's cows, rondalla and underground rivers, Ifad Volcano, the sugar plantations of Cebu and Negros, and Boracay's white sands complete with souvenirs and spa huts, were just a few in the list of new attractions in the Boracay and Cebu segments.

While waiting for the MOA, the NPF reopened the park for free.

The sprawling 45-hectare park was reduced to 37.4 hectares to make way for the security expansion project of the Clark International Airport.

"We worry the first to create a theme park in Asia before other countries picked up the concept," said Pineda. "The new Nayong Pilipino will be elevated and interactive, with more educational."

ONE of several structures left inside Nayong Pilipino at Main Road, Pasay City. [illegible]

METROBRIEFS

Wrong choice

[illegible] Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago (PI) talk to Marikina City Rep. Miro Quimbo (right), not knowing that Quimbo was a policeman. Text [illegible] Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago [illegible] Quimbo, assigned at the Police Public Relations Director City, some of the TV, but had to come from Cebu and on its way to Cagayan de Oro City. Public place the motorcade has a off-duty to save other persons. At the Miriam Defensor Santiago was faced with [illegible] attempt. After talking with persons and soldiers from the [illegible] Quimbo introduced himself as a policeman and told the soldiers to surrender. As two of the soldiers refused to abandon, Public fired his gun, killing two persons on the chest, said Marikina City Police Chief Senior Supt. Manuel Santos. Erwin T. Tulfo Jr.

Bad meal

"THE PGH was not sure," Tan was what the Manila Human Resources and Senior Atty. Manager of the Association of Concierges Corp. told the Secretary day after 12 employees of the call center were rushed to the Rizal Medical and Medical Center for possible food poisoning. Jacobo said the [illegible] a "spoiled dinner" for its employees after they were in the night shift on Tuesday. Tan [illegible] other persons [illegible] Jocelyn R. Uy

Not me!

A REPORTER incorrectly [illegible] of a Grecian Urn

New bus scheme on Edsa begins today

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE METROPOLITAN MANILA Development Authority (MMDA) will kick its controlled bus dispatch scheme today.

President Macapagal-Arroyo is expected to attend the launch of the Organized Bus Route (OBR) scheme at the terminal in Monumento from this morning.

Some 400 Metropolitan Manila buses will be affected initially, MMDA officials said. When fully implemented, the scheme places more than 1,000 buses traversing Edsa under limited dispatch, based on commuters demand.

As planned, the number of trips a bus makes per day will be reduced. In personal, a bus averages four trips.

The MMDA estimates the project to cost around P55.4 million, including expenses for the preparation of facilities and components for the scheme. It expects oil to come fuel and reduce operating costs.

Buses covered by the initial supply fits route from Monumento to Baclaran, Mabuhay, PTI (Pasay Terminal Inc.), Pasay to complete route.

Muntinlupa mayor says projects 'aboveboard'

By Jocelyn R. Uy

MUNTINLUPA CITY MAYOR Jaime Fresnedi said yesterday his administration's projects were all aboveboard.

An unsuspected mayor added that completion and execution hope things. It was being done.

Fresnedi was responding to questions on the legality of his projects raised by opposition Councilor Rene Carl Guerrero involving nine covered court in Barangays Putatan, Tunasan, Mahuna and Cupang, as well as the assisted recovery facility building and new technical school in Putatan.

Guerrero said studies he had considered filing graft charges against the source for violating a local ordinance requiring him to get the consent of the City Council of before entering into an agreement with building contractors. Fresnedi, can be either hand, since Republic Act 9184, or the E-Procurement Law, which, he said, does not require him to seek the council's permission.

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Metro jeeps, buses seek new fare hike next week

By Clarissa S. Bautista

METRO JEEPS AND REGULAR BUSES are set to file next week their second fare hike petition this year. The request of P1.50 (passenger) and 50 (fare) increase in the minimum fare would help them cope with surging prices of diesel, a timelier for the municipal groups said.

If the move is approved, this would raise the minimum fare of jeepneys to P9 and of regular buses to P10. Jeeps and buses started collecting a P1-fare increase last June 15.

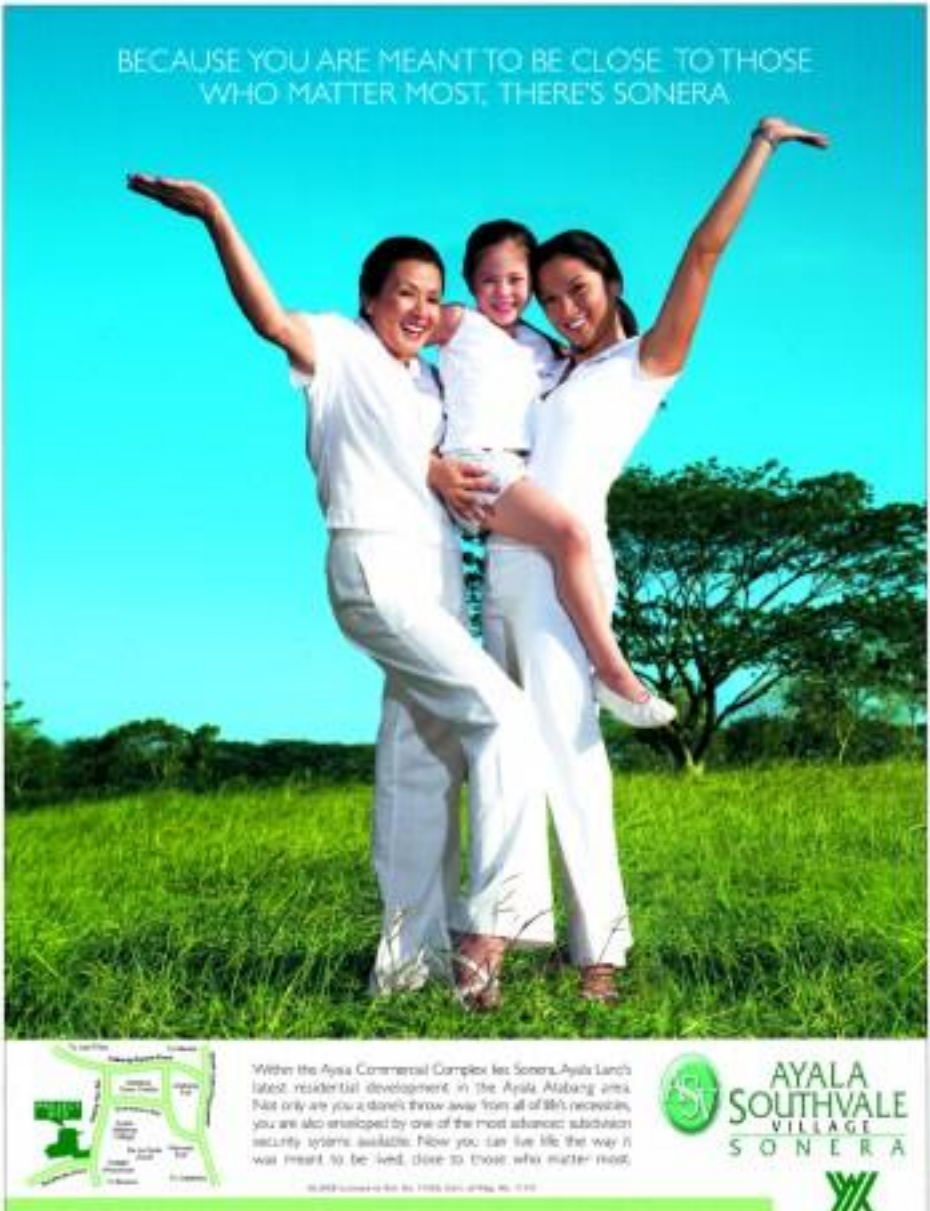
Metro Jeeps would ask the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board to increase the fare for the first 4 kilometers by P1.50 from the current P7.50. Regular buses want a P2 increase for the first 5 km, from the existing P8 fare, said Vigor Mendoza, lawyer and spokesperson for the transport groups. "We just need to get the opinion of the Visayas and Mindanao transport groups," he added.

Jeeps are unsure whether or not they would ask for an increase in the per km fare after the minimum, which is currently pegged at P1.25. Blues, according to Mendoza, would prefer a 25-centavo hike in the per km rate from the current P1.75.

Yasin Isaac is pending petition for a P1.5 increase in fare. Provincial air-conditioned buses have also asked for a 25-centavo per km increase in fares. Both are seeking their first fare hike petition this year.

Mendoza said drivers were buckling under the pressure of increased costs. The price of diesel had gone up by 96 a liter since public utility vehicles raised their fares in June. From the June price of about P30.4 liter, the cost of diesel rose to roughly P32. The energy department had projected a continuous increase in the prices of petroleum products.

Fuel and fossil equally 20 percent of the total cost of drivers and operators. Now it accounts for almost 40 percent because of the cost.



FEU's King Tamsen Arwind Santos tries to drive against Ateneo's Rabeh Al-Hussaini and Ryan Buenafe during the first game of the UAAP finals at the Araneta Coliseum yesterday. ALVIN KUA

FRIDAY
SEPTEMBER 30, 2005

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SPORTS

Editor Rodolfo S. Plaridel

Santos powers FEU Tams

By Jeannette PC Raya

WITH ARWIND SANTOS AT HIS DOMINANT BEST, the Far Eastern U Tamaraws proved they're anything but easy to solve.

Going through in the clutch, Santos added a triple, then scored on a putback with 5.5 seconds remaining as the Tamaraws snapped with a 75-74 triumph over the La Salle Archers in Game 1 of the UAAP basketball Finals yesterday at the Araneta Coliseum.

Santos finished with 20 points on top of 14 rebounds, two steals and three blocks. His game-point shot with 44.6 seconds left tied the game at 73-all.

"I was just praying in the last minutes," said coach Nash Flores after his Tamaraws were served with a rule of forfeiting the series.

"We were game up."

La Salle had a chance to clinch the game, but a Jeff Cariaso triple and a Rico Maierhofer putback crashed out by the dying seconds.

The game, though, turned ugly after the Santos-La Salle assistant team manager Monty Galgolo

(LAST TWO HOURS)
(Results of other games
1 p.m.—Results of the
4:30 p.m.—FEU vs.
Ateneo—Game 2)

58
days to go

23rd
SEA
Games

Red Bull Pennisi eyes return to PBA

By Jose Navarro

FOR OVER A MONTH NOW, MICE PENNISI has been working out to get into game shape for the Red Bull Barako. Outside the gym, he's working just as hard to regain his eligibility to play.

Pennisi continues to work on his citizenship papers and the Red Bull management is optimistic he would be able to clear his name with the Department of Justice, which ordered him deported as a besieged last year.

"Mark is in the process of completing his citizenship papers needed for the DOJ to clear him," said Red Bull team owner Ernesto Chua.

However, Red Bull is prepared to play without the 6-foot-8 Pennisi. The Barako are banking on Dennis Rodriguez, former Alaska Aspira player Williamson and Fredo Bugia to run the slot.

"I will do whatever I have to do to prove that the accusations against me are simply accusations," said Pennisi, who also owns citizenship from Brisbane, Australia, where he accepted his papers.

Yet Red Bull owner Ernesto Rizal, Jan Red Bull partner who was also deported, didn't show as much dedication to make a comeback. Only went to Columbus, Ohio, last year with a visa to return and close his status.

Pagunsan stays alive; Piccio, 13, moves up

By Phaeng B. Castillo

BACOLOD CITY—ARTEMIO BRIGANDI AND JUNIC PAGUNSAN took contrasting routes to the quarterfinals of the Philippine Amateur golf championship, even as a 13-year-old girl seeking action in the first-ever women's division action grabbed the limelight at the start of match play yesterday.

Mandaluyong bested out two foes over a combined 27 holes while Pagunsan, who has yet to win the event—despite his status as the best amateur in the land, won the full route before dispatching Del Monte upstart Rod Dickey Jamolin, 1-up.

Claiming her share of the limelight was Mia Pineda, a chubby high schooler, who engaged veteran Alta de Guzman in a marathon 22-hole duel before prevailing, 1-up, to earn a semifinal confrontation with top seed Concchetta Villanueva.

PHENOMENAL! 13-year-old Mia Pineda

Second seed Francis Bondal arrived a 3-and-2 win over Tracy Lucero and will collide with Lorie Salinas in the other semifinal.

The winner in 1999, Mandaluyong facility standout is primed to repeat as champion of Dino Bunay, 9 and 7, in the opening round before staging back in the afternoon to handle out former youngster Jong Lapuz, 3 and 2.

Pagunsan was an easier 1-and-0 winner over Makiputan Mohamad Ayed but needed all his talent to clip past Jamolin and deny also-ran Jun Bondal at the championship before his scheduled play-debut next year.

Defending champion Jun Bonnin, a 4-and-3 winner over Junie Bondoc, thrust out with Pagunsan today, while Mandaluyong mate Raimundo Del Oliver Ojero bet Mario Gabuja, who won, 2 and 1, over Bernie Natividad.

Teddy Asunto, the third seed, fell, 2-1, to Ted Alfonso, who was later eliminated by little-known Rockwell Asunto, 1 up.

Local favorite Jit Sarmiento took on former Singapore tee ornery and fellow national pool member Michael Bliss, 4 and 2, and will be home's quarterfinal foe.

Ernie Bendoy, the meet fifth seed, was another upset victim after taking a 1-and-1 defeat at the hands of Joseph Labajo, Manila's younger brother.

Makusan No. 2 and fourth seed Ben Chandoon also crashed to the floor, 3&2, by meeting 2002 champion Jayed Abella, 8, and 5. He next plays Joseph Labajo for a final four spot.

Abella took are Jay Suarez, another former caddies' champion and the third ranked amateur, 1 and 2, to make the second round, where Ben took care of him with ease.

Dan and Mandaluyo could meet in the semifinals with victories today, while the winner of the Pagunsan-Bernie clash will advance to the final four versus Sarmiento or Asunto.

Villanueva rose to 4-and-3 victory over Samantha Cabrera, while Roberto earned local favorite and No. 3 seed Anya Tampinco, 3 and 2.

Snail-paced SEAG promo drive hit

IN OFFICIAL OF THE FLIGHT THAT ARRIVED Task Force yesterday lamented the small-paced promotion campaign for the biennial meet which is just 50 days from its Nov. 27 kickoff.

Former congressman and Philippine Olympic Committee second vice president Jerry Angping said the people need to know that it is hosting the regional meet—the advertisements and promotion—as soon as possible.

"It's about time we put up a good public awareness campaign," said Angping, who just came from Bangkok and witnessed Thailand's "impressive preparations" for the 45-nation 1st Asian Indoor Games slated Nov. 12-19.

Angping, who is also head of the IOC subcommittee, cited the lack of streamers, posters and flyers to drum up interest for the Games.

"It's time we get rid of (remaining)," said Angping. "We always wait for the last minute to do things."

More Anthony Reyes

What Pacquiao failed to teach Gejon

BARE EYE

Ricardo Trinidad

ON THE NAL FLIGHT FROM Tokyo to Manila on Monday, Fidel Gejon took a window seat where he tried to figure out what went wrong in his game by a world-boxing crown the night before.

He did follow all of Manny Pacquiao's pre-fight instructions.

Gejon heard Jones and visibly won the boxing points.

In fact, the knockout had him ahead, 58-54, when the bout at the Yokohama Arena was stopped in the 10th round after he got cut a third time, the result of another headbutt.

So why did he have to suffer his first defeat in 33 fights and lose empty-handed?

* * *

Gejon claimed he had trained harder and longer for his world crown quest.

He checked out in his host for his title fight against world mini-mosquitoes champion Rolando Navia of Japan.

Gejon did his damned best, no doubt about it.

But, then it was not a question of what he was able to carry out during the abbreviated title bout.

It was a question of what he failed to do out there.

They've many answers to this ingredient that could've propelled the amazing chronicler.

* * *

In the case of Manny Pacquiao, the boxing weapon could be aptly called his ring belly.

IT'S NOT A SECRET.

In Gejon's case, it was not knowing he was finally told that he had inched the necessary approximate inches to the scales.

OK, 14, was mastered and diminished most of the first six rounds, using his longer arms and sharp jabbing, as had been prescribed by Pacquiao.

However, Gejon not packed more he turned the corner—the 7th round, to be exact—thereby allowing the unchained defending champ Ledwa to stand fully him.

* * *

Weeks, short and ill-equipped, Gejon rounded four and more on to win rounds 7, 8 and 9 in the Nagoya scorecard.

Gejon took all the other rounds, thereby edging Weeks by two points.

But history the cards. Although that margin had made Gejon appear the winner, it was not quite enough to wrest the crown from the champ.

Gejon, indeed, had been dicted changed.

They have different names for this malpractice: homerun decision, hometown decision, hometown decision, hometown decision, etc.

* * *

But, whether you like it or not, the duty trick has become part of the grammar of professional boxing. A trifling challenger cannot hope to win a world title merely by dancegraphs.

It was just too bad that Manny Pacquiao, who took the trouble of slapping his endless post-victory engagements to personally help in the crown quest, could not detail the intricacies of sustained boxcraft inside the ring to Gejon.

Pacquiao, a born warrior, would've felt, quite honestly, that this backbone of a boxer's attitude no longer had to be emphasized to someone seeking a world crown.

Of course, it has got to be told again: Gejon must sharpen and skills, aggressiveness, the so-called five-in-the-belly should regularly had setting-up exercise.

* * *

Anyway, Pacquiao did find time in Tokyo, where his group had convoyed from the failed attractions in Tacloban, to make a hedonist's sightseeing.

Gejon, Black Japan over both eyebrows, sat in a soda at the hotel lobby while Pacquiao dallied with sharp outings of his fabulous flow he termed the DOS ARNIS—the world flyweight crown title a devil away.

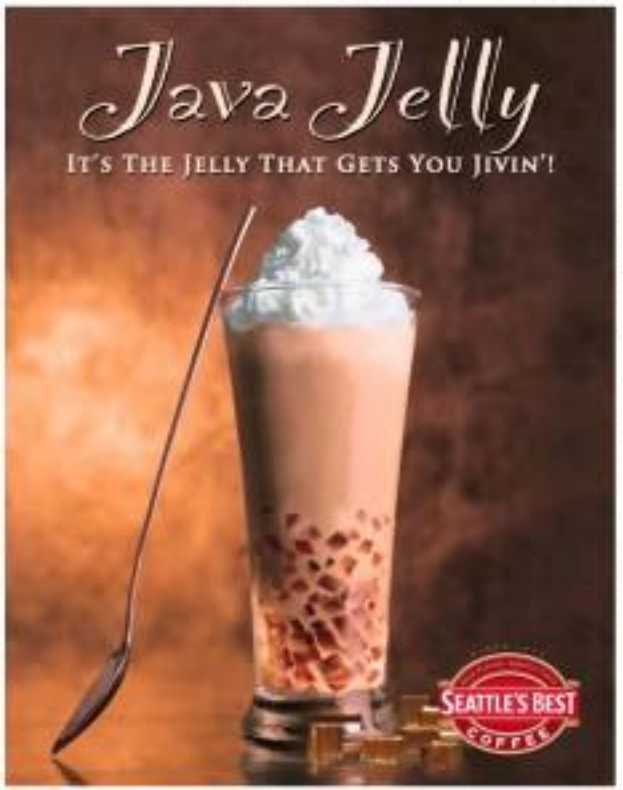
Gejon pressure offensives against Chatchai Sasakul of Thailand in 1998.

Pacquiao had to make his campaign clear again. You don't bargain for a world boxing career using knee change-

Vilmah guanwiang barya-barya lamang."

* * *

(EDIT BIT: Malacañang is busy preparing a grand celebration for the triumphant rival Manny Pacquiao, Brior Viloria and Rey "Bonito Boom" Bautista, complete with a riders cape parade and a welcome by President Macapagal-Arroyo on Monday. The area relayed by broadcasters (actual dancer, who said he has been tasked to take over the gold-en fighters in the Parade) also the parade.... Some labeler of the PM, sequence considerations office a calling members of Class 1995 of Manila Occidental National High School (MOHS) for a meeting on Oct. 31, 5 pm. at the Rotary Place, Quezon City Hall, Illinois. Dividend to discuss their grand reunion in 2006. Phone contact Linda Rebels at tel. 6927800001 and Carlos Villa, 0917-8071230.)



RP bet 3rd best Asian in world duathlon

NATIONAL DUATHLON TITLIST RIMO 'Sinbi Boy' Mendoza found the first European, Australian and American athletes at the World Duathlon Championship just too good recently, finishing 29th overall in 2 hours 0 minutes and 39 seconds.

World champion Paul Amey of Britain won the event with a time of 1:56:28, followed by another Briton, Tim Don, also the runner-up last year, in 1:56:53 and Spain's Aitor Garcia who was third in 1:57:04.

Mendoza, who is aiming to win next year's Asian Duathlon Championship which the country is hosting in Clark Field, Pampanga, was third best among the Asian entries behind two Japanese bets.

Adriano Tiu-ng Filipinas campaigner, Sherwin finished a respectable third overall in the Asian Duathlon Championships held in Thailand early this year.

"I told Ryan that it will be a tough competition and now he realizes how tough it was. Still it was a good lesson and experience for him," said team manager Melvin Sunio.

Former national triathlon champion George Ming also found the opposition in the 25-29 age group too tough and wound up 28th.

Three Subic resident topped the women's elite field with Michelle Dilao, Carmina Mendoza and Andrea D'Hemecourt finishing 2:11:09, 2:11:29 and 2:11:36, respectively.

Jess The Cyclists, chris Ding, the event in the women thing the last done with all the right D'Asaro among the rally route, finished the 10K race 1:08:36.10 to win event in 3:14.30.

The finished behind another Asian bet, Tomoi Oda, who clocked 3:11:00.

The Philippine hopes' that is, Bernardo Australia, was backed by Ingrid, Israel Commandoldes, 2005, Hotel Philippines, Mid Group of Companies, Clark Development Corp., Illinois Motorbike Mfrs., ClarkMac Motor, Asterion Sports, Asiel, Rally Project, Pentax, Endurer, Enervit, Accelerade, Transtion 2 and Shining Sun Bit.

MOTORCYCLE MAINTENANCE TIPS

4T Castrol

Q. Will Castrol TRIZONE oils work in scooters?

A. Yes they will work in the engine compartment of four-stroke scooters but not of two-stroke scooters.

TRIZONE

Injured Dy bows out; Zoleta rips Taiwanese

By Marc Anthony Reyes

CEBADIC TRIPUTS HEAD VEEDAN attained the injured 10-American points Bernie Dy, 6-4, 6-3, yesterday to extend the girls' singles quarterfinals run for national leg Philippine JET junior tennis championships.

Ellen broke the hearts of the two-leg champion's admirers, winning down Dy from the baseline at the Ynares Sports Cultural Sports Center.

The 23 year-old Ellen was playing only her third tournament this year but showed mental toughness against Dy, ranked 30th in the world, who extended her wild injury only after the match.

Mae will next take on seventh-seeded Stephanie Vogt of Liechtenstein, Vogt, who beat her in the first round of the two-leg last month, 7-5, 6-3, lost on the semifinal Filipino Trudy Gee tomorrow, 6-1, 6-1.

"I didn't go out playing to win the game right away, but I think she's bothered by her hand," said Mae through her father, Bernie, who dropped his teaching career to follow his daughter's career.

Mae's victory somehow avenged her doubles defeat—with Angie Lee—to Dy and Pit Gamelo Edillon Bermejo in the title clash last week.

Also yesterday, local bet Rosalie Nikki Zoleta booked out fourth seed Taiwanese Lu Chien-ju, 6-1, 6-3.

Zoleta advanced against their other seed Shih seed Shelle Gaudiez, who scored a 6-1, 6-1 victory over Malaysian Thien Sukaiman Anna Ting Ee of Taiwan ousted No. 6 Shelbel Cabana, 7-5, 6-2, to set up a match against Jacquelyn Ryan of Australia, who beat Japan's Ayumi Yoshida, 6-4, 6-2.

Santos powers FEU Tamaraws

From page A-26

rubbed onto the court and hit Santos on the back of the head. The unsportsmanlike effort was caught on television.

Commissioner Joe Lipa said he will review the incident on tape before entertaining a recommendation to the board on how to proceed.

Before Samuel church Soakes, the Archer's entered on the way to victory behind Joseph Yeo, who gave La Salle the lead at 73-70 at the 1:37 mark.

Soakes had fouled the Tamaraws' offense early in the fourth period, but the La Salle sophomore scored the Tafi layup and added a point, 66-65.

He drilled in 26 points to pace the Archers, who posted the game's biggest lead at 45-29.

A Santos three-pointer sparked the Tamaraws' 13-0 comeback that tied the contest at the half, 42-42.

Rookie Castle Onwere rushed the in-out Lady Eagles' third quarter run for a 60-56 Centro 13 triumph over the defending champion Adamson Lady Falcons in the women's basketball finals.

The UP Junior Maroons then arranged a junior title showdown against the La Salle Bengals after stunning back-to-back champion Ateneo Eagles, 75-58, in their knockout semifinal game.

Pamela Montejo and Shai Lucas shot 17 points apiece for the victorious

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SPORTS

Monster truck, flashy bikes at Custom Car Show

THE 3RD GALACTICO CO-SPORT TRADE Custom Car & Bike Show is cruising until this Sunday, 10 to 9 tonight at SM Megamall B, Mandaluyong City. Organized by TeamDiesel International Inc., the show brings under one roof more than 40 of the best customized cars, SUVs, sport trucks, pick-ups, vans and motorbikes which are vying for the Diesel Show honors in the Sport Trucks, Custom Cars and Motorbikes categories. Among them is Diablo, a custom-tweaked Toyota FJ Cruiser 4x4 Offroader Truck.

SAMSUNG INTERSCHOLASTICS

La Salle golfers post record clean sweep

LA SALLE PAINTED THE FIFTH SAMSUNG Interscholastics golf tournament green yesterday by pulling off a clean sweep of all four divisions to extend its monopoly fashion at the executive course of the Valley Golf and Country Club in Antipolo.

From college down to the grade school competition, the top team award went to the same school as La Salle rewrote interscholastic history with nine trophies showing on display.

Miller Yee highlighted the big show with a 36-point effort that was fun for individual crown and powered La Salle Green Hills to the overall plum at the expense of their college elders.

LGH, also made up of Mateo Oliver, Matthew and Carlos Fernando, wound up with a 169 total for the day and a 54-hole aggregate of 492, beating the college division-winning De La Salle-University by a point.

Jerome Bautista, William Hong, Oliver Gan, Mario Capistrano and Charles Hong of DLSU, however, were unchallenged in their division as Green finished 67 points behind.

Golfers Sunday, returning to the game after a year-long hiatus, joined hands with Kim Hong, Alex Garcia and Akeh de Villa to win the girls' college-high school division by seven points (Jo Ibid-Hong, 170-165).

YEE: Big, big round

And the La Salle Green 11th grade school squad of Ali Ramos, Maggy Yee, Jhoe de Claro, Sam Salcedo completed the demolition job by beating Dominated Peninsula second squad, 278-289.

Reagan de Guzman, Ana Ibibiza, Krista Perez, Bianca dela Fuente captured the only other title disputed by Bonifay, the grade school girls' class other not a La Salle team was represented.

Individual winners were Charles Hong in boys' college, Crystal Esperat in girls' high school, Jojo, Marcel Pujol in boys' grade school, Regan de Guzman in girls' grade school, Princess Sapiral in the girls' special division and former would pargall III Guevarra in the boys' special division.

Pennisi working on reinstatement

DEFENSE, SEE SULE TRADITIONAL TIMBRE work in the Philippine Basketball Association, was returning last year following the departure of big men Dwight Ramy and Mick Pennisi. Still, the Bandera showed enough improvement under head coach Ong Guan by finishing fourth in the last PBA Fiesta Conference.

"But that was wounded by that huge hole in the middle. Opposing teams ran through the Bandera at will," coach Guan lamenting a recent interview at the Pasadena penthouse of team owner George Chua.

"Fortunately, we were able to pull through and make the Final Four."

For this season, the 43-year-old Guan said he would bank on import Quentin Gray, a 6-foot-7, 240-pound swingman in a bid to repeat the stunts and did reliable Ben Villanueva, a 5-foot-8 former Ateneo Blue Eagle who has been so impressive that Red Bull made him a reliefer. Guan added he was also looking forward to the return of PBA-Australian Pennisi who is now in the country to work on his documentary requirements in a bid to rejoin the league just like what we Tenbros did.

Tenbros was banned from playing in the PBA and was ordered deported by the authorities for "taking" his Filipino citizenship, but he was allowed to play again after he submitted documentary requirements proving his Filipino roots. As a result, government agencies such as the Department of Justice, the Bureau of Immigration and the Citizen and Amusements Board endorsed Tenbros's return to the PBA.

"There is now a precedent," said Guan. "Anyone could follow suit."

The 6-foot-9 Pennisi had been a vital cog in Red Bull's successful campaign since the Philippine Invitational Conference in 2000.

Married to a Filipina, Pennisi is much talented for his good standard off and on the court. As a player, he is comfortable at the 3 position because he shoots the 3-point shot. Pennisi is a tough and experienced player.

"We'll be glad to have Mick back as long as he submits the required papers," said team manager Tony Chua.

PBA commissioner Noli Eala had said that whatever the BOI decides will be the position that the league will take.

The PBA opens its 31st season this Sunday, Oct. 2 at the Big Dome featuring Red Bull against Purefoods in the first game at 6 p.m.

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Mejo

BUSINESS

Editor Basil G. Mascardo
Assistant Editor Connie S. Bartolome

4 firms scramble over IS property

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE AYALA and Gokongwei groups are among those vying for the former International School property in Makati. PHILIP

THE SCRAMBLE FOR THE 6.8-hectare former International School property in Makati City is beginning to heat up, with four big property developers, including the Ayala and Gokongwei groups, vying for the upscale lot a stone's throw from the business district.

The prime property on Kalayaan Avenue, which the government plans to bid out at a floor price of about P1.2 billion or P23,000 per square meter, lies also attracted Alphaland Corp., the residential developers Rockwell Land Corp. and the Consunji Property group.

Robinsons Land Corp. executive vice president Frederick Go said the Inquirer earlier the Gokongwei group's development plans for the former IS property would depend on the building restrictions covering the area. He noted that the government at first wanted to turn the area into a cyberpark.

A source from the Ayala group identified the Makati several business districts and the Fort Bonifacio complex, said the company was looking at the property as part of its regular landbanking.

Department of Finance undersecretary Thomas Seda said the disinvestment would recommend to the government's privatization council—which was set to meet next week—a subdividing of the whole property on a modified basis.

"The auction will probably be in mid-October or early November," Seda said. "If it's [divided], we'll present to negotiations."

There had been at least two failed auctions for the property and the government could resort to a negotiated sale if the bidding would fail a third time, Seda said.

The area is now to be ideal for the development of high-rise residential or business complex given its proximity to the Rockwell center.

The land was originally owned by the International School, a foreign institution. In 1973, then President Marcos issued a decree mandating the school to donate the property to the government.

In August 2000, the school and the government signed to the disposition of the property. The school had since transferred to a bigger and more modern campus in Fort Bonifacio.

Japanese sentiment in RP improves but still negative

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE BUSINESS SENTIMENT among Japanese companies in the Philippines improved but remained negative for the fifth straight month in September, a Jetro survey showed.

"But now due to soaring costs of inputs and energy, Japan External Trade Organization said.

The survey showed that Japanese companies doing business here thought better of the country this month compared to a month ago, but they still gave the country a diffusion index (DI) rating of negative 4.3 percent. This was better than the negative 8.8 percent in August.

The slight improvement was attributed to the recovery in the demand the downturn experienced Jetro said it would likely improve further in the next two to three months but overall outlook negative at -3.4 percent.

Jetro said the Philippine ratings reflected overall sentiment for the five major Asean members—including Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore—which overall DI has been on a downward trend since April, and showed negative figures for August and September.

"The sharp rise in the prices of crude oil, steel, and other raw materials continued to impact on the profits of Japanese companies operating in this region, and this is thought to be a contributing factor to the deterioration of business sentiment," Jetro said.

Jetro said companies were now able to pass on the additional costs to consumers through increases in their selling prices, resulting in the deterioration of their earnings.

Jetro polls the companies to measure year-on-year changes expressed as diffusion indices (DI), to check business outlooks for the current month and the next two or three months ahead.

Firms were asked to compare earnings prospects, supply and demand, inventory, sales prices and investment prospects with those recorded in the same period a year earlier.

WHAT'S INSIDE

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ING bullish on RP B1

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WTO and the Big Noise

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

AN IMPORTANT EVENT IS HAPPENING in the next three months. From Dec. 13 to 18, the WTO will hold its 6th Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong. There they will finalize the remaining points in the ongoing talks on agriculture, industry, services, intellectual property rights and other trade related concerns under the WTO's Doha Development Round (DDR).

Former Sen. Wigberto E. Tañada, the NGO Trade Alliance (FTA) lead economic chief, keeps our government negotiators "stable a bold stand in the forthcoming ministerial by asserting our national interest, consistent with the supposed development thrust of DDR."

In its published common agri-labour agenda approved by its 10 members fed. countries and organizations, the Mission Agriculture states: "Oppose ultra-IP reductions in a sector until that sector has a level playing field." This is achieved "through the appropriate elimination of subsidies [by] other countries and the provision of the appropriate comprehensive enforcement mechanism for our farmers."

COMMENTARY

Background

Several empirical studies have shown that in general, the WTO has benefited the developed countries and caused harm to developing countries. At the WTO Hong Kong meeting, our Philippine negotiators should remind the developed countries of the WTO's guiding preamble:

"Trade and economic endeavors should be conducted with a view to raising standards of living, ensuring full employment and large and steadily growing volume of real income and effective demand, and en-

LAMBUNAO CITY (PROVINCE OF ILOILO)
ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

CONSTRUCTION OF ONE (1) 69/13.8 kV, 4 MVA AIR INSULATED SUBSTATION, INCLUDING 3 MEGAWATT POWER CAPACITY MOBILE SUBSTATION MONITORING SYSTEM AND EQUIPMENT FOR PHASE

1. The Lambunao City (Province of Iloilo) Economic Zone Authority (LCEZA) will receive bids for the construction of one (1) 69/13.8 kV, 4 MVA Air Insulated Substation (AIS) including 3 megawatt power capacity mobile substation monitoring system and equipment for phase [illegible] and the following WTO breakers:

2. The Lambunao City (Province of Iloilo) Economic Zone Authority (LCEZA) now invites bids for the above Project. Delivery of the Goods is required by [illegible] Bidders should have completed, within the last [illegible] years from the date of submission and receipt of bids, a contract similar to the Project. The description of an eligible bidder is contained in the Bidding Documents, namely, [illegible]

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criterion as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act (RA) 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act".

4. Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, partnerships, or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to RA 5183 and subject to the provisions of the Government Procurement Policy Board (GPPB) Resolution No. [illegible]

5. Prospective bidders may obtain further information from the LCEZA Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below during [illegible]

6. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of [illegible] Pesos (P [illegible]). It may be acquired at the address below during [illegible]

7. The LCEZA will hold a Pre-Bid Conference on [illegible] at the [illegible] which shall be optional.

8. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before [illegible]. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stated in ITB Clause 18.

9. Bid opening shall be on [illegible] at the address below. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend the activity.

10. The LCEZA reserves the right to reject any and all bids, declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award in accordance with Section 41 of RA 9184 and its IRR, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

11. For further information, please refer to:

[illegible]
Chairman, LCEZA Bids and Awards Committee
Secretariat

[illegible]
Chairman, LCEZA Bids and Awards Committee

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Victor C. Aquino

DESPITE THE OWNER'S old child's rock and his being a cousin of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, SBC Development Bank of Cavite ("Legacy") — America has been habitually negligent in complying with the annual reportorial requirements of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

According to a certification issued by the SEC, SBC Bank has consistently failed to file with the corporate regulator the thrift bank's annual financial statement for 1997, 1998, and from 2001 to 2004.

LBC Bank also failed to file a general information sheet from 1998 to 2003 and in 2005.

[Calabrese sent two emails to SBC Bank seeking its comment but it has not responded to of this writing.]

The thrift bank, which had pleasant an conversation floating along with its popular concierge service company, has had serious auditing problems with its two external auditors—Joaquin Cunanan and Guzman, Bocaling & Co.—in recent years.

In the 2003 financial report, Guzman, Bocaling cited Raggod in audit report on the bank by saying, "They were not able to apply sufficient auditing procedures to satisfy themselves regarding the bank's due from other banks and due from branches/head office accounts."

"The Bank's accounting records did not provide adequate reconciliation to support its due from other banks and Due from branches/head office accounts amounting to P689,886,721 and P70,133,268, respectively," Guzman, Bocaling said.

Cunanan, Bocaling added that the previous auditor, Joaquin Cunanan, had raised the same auditing concerns in the immediately preceding two financial periods.

Guzman, Bocaling noted that LBC Bank and the thrift's board ratified a September 2003 memorandum in which the thrift bank promised to "address all identified weaknesses in risk management and internal control system," including the immediate infusion of fresh capital to comply with the PDIC-stallion minimum capital requirements and the reduction of exposures in borrowings whose loan balances exceeded the single borrower's limit and Dosc within the regulated ceilings.

Lately, the thrift bank has cautioned up its advertising exposures, heralding what it claimed to be its much-improved financial ratios. The figures submitted by the bank in the Bangko Sentral also tended to support the recovery claim.

Court pokes into Victoria's secrets

THE DOLMEN'S newest billionaire, corporate lawyer Victoria delos Reyes, has been ordered by the probate court to provide a "true inventory and appraisal" of the movable properties left by her late childless aunt, Doña Hipolito delos Reyes Phillips.

A legal ethics lecturer, Delos Reyes claimed that her aunt left only about P500 million worth of cash and properties, as against the conservative estimate of P2.3 billion given by the surviving spouse to the Makati Regional Trial Court.

In a Sept. 23 order, Judge Maria Cristina Cornejo also reminded Delos Reyes as executrix to secure prior court approval before selling, mortgaging or encumbering the assets of her aunt, a power Miss Philippines, lawyer and businesswoman.

Phillips left an American husband, a retired doctor whom she met in the Philippines after World War II, who is now claiming his conjugal half through lawyer Victor Claudino.

Prior to his late 80s, Dr. Phillips returned to the United States in the early 1960s. Despite their separation, the Phillips couple remained cordial to each other and even maintained a business relationship, such regular money transfers between their respective bank accounts in the United States until Pacita's death in March, according to the widower's counsel, Victor Claudino.

It was one of the accounts, according to Claudino, that Delos Reyes emptied of about $400,000 without first informing the US executor about the death of the account owner.

Money-go-round

• THE MANILA Golf Club has indefinitely deferred the inauguration of high-tech golf in the country's most exclusive country club in deference to Malacañang's energy conservation program.

• THE LEASE of Goodwill Bookstore at Glorietta will expire in three years, and the three-floor space is up for grabs. In the meantime, Goodwill is trying to sublease the space to other tenants to make up for the bookstore's enormous retail slack.

Heard through the grapevine

FIL-ESTATES Hotel "Inn" Cavite has acquired 50 percent of the Manila Times from the beleaguered publisher Dolor Ang.

Cavite will assume the chairmanship of the daily broadsheet rearing conservas while the presidency, currently occupied by Enrique Locsin, will be turned over to Ang's son, currently the paper's GVP.

Locsin is expected to go full time into helping to restore his own family's terminal Free Press magazine.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@philstar.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

Taipan to need ₱35B for UIC

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE GROUP OF Taipan John Colong Sy is said would require P35 billion to fund the possible takeover of Singapore office developer Ease of Industrial Corp. (UIC), according to brokerage IGB Kim Eng Securities.

IK Estonia Sdn Bhd says the Singapore unit, Telegraph Development Ltd., is currently raised to make its UIC to 29.99 percent 29.763 percent.

Under Singapore rules, shareholders that own 30 percent of the outstanding shares of listed firms are required to buy the rest of the company.

Reacted to the company declined, however, to comment on the group of Colongsoy will take over UIC.

UIC has controlling interest in Singapore's land, one of the biggest office developers in Singapore's commercial business district.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
SEC Building, EDSA, Greenhills
City of Mandaluyong, Metro Manila

REMINDER

By virtue of its authority under the Corporation Code, the Securities and Exchange Commission earlier revoked the certificates of incorporation that failed to comply with its reportorial requirements.

The details of the revocation were spelled out in the Orders published in 2003 and 2004 in the Philippine Daily Inquirer, namely:

Year of Incorporation of Covered Corporations	Date of Order	Date of Publication	Date of Revocation
1998-1999	22 April 2003	05 April 2003	29 May 2003
1967-1975	27 May 2003	02 June 2003	02 July 2003
1976-1984	08 July 2003	11 July 2003	11 August 2003
1985-1991	28 August 2003	28 August 2003	28 September 2003
1992-1995	30 September 2003	04 October 2003	03 November 2003
1996-1997	10 February 2004	14 February 2004	15 March 2004

If the affected corporations want to continue their operation, they have **THREE YEARS** from the date of revocation within which to file with the SEC a motion to Lift the Order of Revocation. Otherwise, the revocation shall become final and irrevocable.

The corporations that do not want to have their revocation lifted and are solvent to wind up their operation within the same period in accordance with the Corporation Code.

The list of corporations is posted the website, www.sec.gov.ph. For confirmation, interested parties may call Asst. Director Conrado del Rosario at 724-01-36 or visit the SEC Company Registration and Monitoring Department on 3rd Floor, SEC Bldg., EDSA, Mandaluyong City, or any SEC Extension Office in the provinces.

(Sgd.) **RENITO S. CATAMAN**
Director
Company Registration and Monitoring Department

SRD-Sept. 16, 2005

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September 19, 2000 Country	Unit	Peso Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.026021	1.00000	38.4300
Japan	Yen	0.002362	0.00907	0.2487
United Kingdom	Pound	1.464952	1.71708	56.0378
Switzerland	Franc	0.015702	0.60340	23.1900
Netherlands	Euro	0.023752	0.91273	35.0878
Canada	Dollar	0.016855	0.65000	24.9780
Australia	Dollar	0.015207	0.58440	22.4580
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.003337	0.12820	4.9274
Germany	Euro	0.023752	0.91273	35.0878
Belgium	Franc	0.000577	0.02218	0.8525
France	Franc	0.003620	0.13910	5.3460
Netherlands	Guilder	0.010921	0.41970	16.1324
Thailand	Baht	0.000651	0.02500	0.9608
UAE	Dirham	0.007082	0.27210	10.4580
Iran	Euro	0.023752	0.91273	35.0878
Singapore	Dollar	0.015117	0.58100	22.3283
Brazil	Real	0.013972	0.53700	20.6414
Vietnam	Dong	0.000001	0.00004	0.0015
Taiwan	Dollar	0.000808	0.03105	1.1935
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.010263	0.39440	15.1609
Kuwait	Dinar	0.076532	2.94100	113.0331
Saudi Arabia	Riyal	0.006935	0.26650	10.2446
Norway	Krone	0.003134	0.12045	4.6307
Pakistan	Rupee	0.000435	0.01670	0.6421
South Africa	Rand	0.003913	0.15040	5.7817
Korea	Won	0.000021	0.00081	0.0311
Sweden	Krona	0.002601	0.09995	3.8423
Qatar	Riyal	0.007151	0.27480	10.5643
Spain	Peseta	0.000140	0.00538	0.2069
Libya	SR Dinar	0.016807	0.64600	24.8348
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000003	0.00010	0.0040

INSULAR LIFE	UNIT PRICES (in Php)	
Investment Funds of Wealth Builder	September 26, 2000	September 19, 2000
Fixed Income Fund	1.012968	1.011006
Balanced Fund	1.036359	1.034053
Equity Fund	0.911307	0.901500

Prices (computed on the basis of the Net Asset Value) are subject to management and other fees and may go down in value. Investment Funds are not insured deposits and are not guaranteed by the Insurance Commission. The weekly unit prices are also available at www.insular.ph.

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WTO . . .

Continued from B2

pending the production of and trade in goods and services, while allowing for the optimal use of the world's resources in accordance with the objective of sustainable development, seeking both to protect and preserve the environment and to enhance the means for doing so in a manner consistent with their respective needs and concerns at different levels of economic development."

It appears this has been more rhetoric than a reality in WTO. This is why the DOS ministerial conference in November 2001 proclaimed that its main objective was to put the needs and interests of developing countries at the heart of the WTO's work program. Since then, not much has happened.

The FES states: "It is clear that the one-size-fits-all liberalization model of globalization is at the root of global, regional and national inequalities and the weak poverty bending many in developing countries, the Philippines in particular."

Key issues

We identify three issues that our government negotiators should address and win in the coming ministerial meeting in Qatar:

The first is the special and differential treatment (S&D) clause, which is central to the WTO Doha Declaration. S&D appears to be relegated into the background for the meeting. We should make it a main guiding principle for the negotiations. S&D means that a developing country should have the flexibility in formulate its own trade regime that supports its development needs. This includes the upward or downward readjustment of tariffs when warranted by the nation's requirements for agro-industrial development, job preservation and expansion, and poverty reduction.

The second is that we should win agreements on specific terms in the areas of special products (SPs) and special safeguard measures (SSMs). Agriculture Undersecretary Segfredo Serrano has been and admirable in international leadership fighting for these agreements in the alliance of 33 countries (G33). With the G33 and as behind him, we can win for the developing countries the flexibility to define our own sensitive products with the appropriate screening criteria and the provision for the corresponding special safeguard measures.

For fisheries, we should reject the imposition of minimum bound tariff rates covering our sensitive fishery products. We should also reject the proposal that fishery products, as well as all other products covered in the WTO's non-agricultural market access agreement, be imposed bound tariff rates two times our current MFN applied tariffs. This ignores our country's existing low tariffs resulting from our earlier unilateral tariff liberalization.

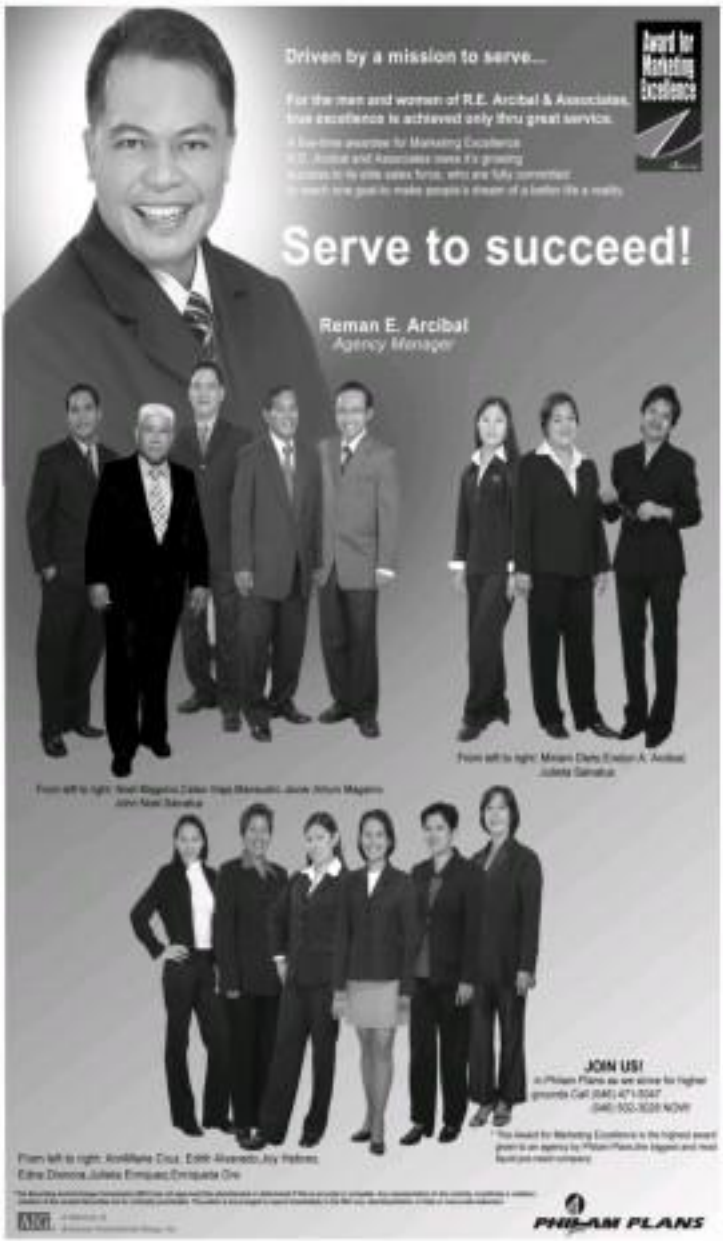
Need for unity

To conclude, we need to engage in international trade. When developed countries can not get what they want from the WTO (which has been happening recently), they resort to bilateral trade agreements. Since they have more power than us, they often end up winning and as losing in the trade negotiations. It is therefore to our advantage that we use WTO as the arena where developing countries can band together and tilt the balance of power in our favor.

In pursuit of this objective, Jeremy Hobbs and Shalmirae Khan, Oxfam International executive director and Philippine policy officer, respectively, met with agriculture and industry (I) leaders last month to plan the "Big Noise" campaign in the Philippines. Its theme is "Make trade fair."

The Alyansa Agribisyo is sponsoring a lecture on this campaign open to the public. Both agriculture and industry I as we charge at 5 pm Oct. 5 in the Philippine Social Science Center Conference Room 4, Commonwealth Avenue, Diliman, Q.C. For more information on this lecture and the Big Noise Campaign, please call Cyd Almeda at 920-44-76. With One Big Noise running from now 200 countries through the 18 million signature campaign to make trade fair, it is hoped that the WTO Ministerial Meeting this December will finally make WTO responsive to the NGO preamble and the developmental thrust of the Doha Declaration.

(The author is the former Cabinet secretary for Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects, and former undersecretary for agriculture, and trade and industry. For inquiries and suggestions, email agrisocialpolitik@yahoo.com or telefax 451-1665.)



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ING bullish on RP

By Doris C. Dumlao

LEYDEN FINANCIAL giant ING has raised its faith on the Philippines, but said maintained interest rates would linger on fiscal improvements and political stability.

"For the rest of 2005, we see healthy ex-Philippine dollar paper due to the carries value and high yield. These factors support our bullish view that we have likely seen past August's political scandal," said ING economist Joey Cuyegkeng in an economic and policy report dated Sept. 15.

He said the government's tense borrowing requirement for 2006 are casting the anxiety of these ECBs.

ING Bank expects the country's 2006 budget deficit to hit P195 billion or 3.2 percent of Gross Domestic Product.

He said the government may get on a spending spree this year, but with "solid" expenditure over the, a 2005 deficit of P240 billion is still in public.

He said rating agencies Standard & Poor's, Fitch and Moody's would continue to look for proof of government's resolve to implement the value added tax, and further cut fiscal deficits.

LIFESTYLE

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2257 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

COUSINS Donnie Tantoco and Anton Huang, both astute retailers, with Ernie Lopez

UK household brand comes to the Philippines

JUST WHEN MANY BUSINESSMEN ARE ducking for cover because of our troubled economy, Stores Specialists Inc. (SSI) continues to expand. It is opening the Philippine store of the leading UK specialty store Debenhams in November and before that, in October, the country's first free-standing store of the world-renowned Spanish women's brand, Zara.

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

Why the bold moves while other businesses hold back? "This is the business we're in, no way to go but forward," SSI executive vice president Anton Huang told us.

"It's a mixed bag," he described the business climate. While some parts of the retail sector may be in a slump or plateau, the high-end retail sector, which includes SSI, is not. "Ours is growing. It's been a good '04 and '05," he said.

Anton thinks it could be because people

MERY Tantoco, Ruel Maniago and Marcelo Tantoco Lopez

ISABEL Preysler (third from left) with daughters Ana, Tamara and Chabeli

UK household brand comes to the Philippines

ISABELLE Tantoco Pineda

[illegible] aren't traveling or shopping abroad as much, so they buy their luxury stuff here. Hill has over 40 designer brands, including Gucci, YSL. Rem it's opening the Retail brand Debenhams in a 1,000-sq m space in Edsa Shangri-La Mall in November.

According to Aston, they'd been scouting six different outlets abroad for new trends. Four months ago they saw the serious potential of bringing Debenhams to Manila because "of its various stylish offerings, all values for money. Their designer brands are relatively low-priced, yet good names. It's a better value proposition."

Debenhams, founded in 1778, is a famous institution. It is a household name in Britain. Its range includes clothes, fashion accessories, bed and bath products, infants' and children's lines. Among its designer labels are Matthew Williamson, Butterfly, Jasper Conran, LK Aitken Mackintosh (blue), Williamson and Wandsworth, so you must have read a few times, on fronts of Bollywood stars. Williamson is known for the flowery, particularly Indian, look in his designs.

Toward the end of year, Hill will hold special events to introduce brands such as Lacoste and Kate Spade. The brand that Aston got to meet Lacoste endorser Andy Roddick in New York last month, when Roddick gained a Lacoste tweet during the US Open.

All is part of the Tantoco retail empire. It was a pleasurable experience to have a Sunday dinner with two generations of Tantocos at Gino Barbie Annie Anton's room. Andy organized the dinner. The Tantoco siblings, who have taken over from their mom Gloria, the Barbie namesake, were there—Rico, Matthew and Ed Pineda, Mercher, Marilen, and the third generation Tantocos—Anton, Dennis and wife Cecilia, Dino, Katrina and Jose Paulo Lobregat, and Bianca Lopez-Dangcil.

Isabel Preysler

It was Andy's thank-you dinner for Mery's Society feel by its rich lots. Liz Bermudez, Ruel Maniago and Philip Ang outgoing. Shortly after, Liz pulled out invitations—a sweet and interview with one of the world's style icons, Isabel Preysler, who used to be the most famous Filipina person in the world.

After she married to Spain, Isabel married Julio Iglesias in 1971 when Julio was a Real Madrid soccer player, way before he became the music icon world-wide. They have three children, including Enrique Iglesias, yes, the Enrique Iglesias.

They divorced later. Isabel is now married to the former finance minister of Spain, Miguel Boyer. Isabel has always lived in Europe and is always seen girl and has even served school of high society rags such as Ola.

Liz trained her dad's arm to snag the exclusive photos for Encore. Her parents, Ambassador to Spain Lito and Candidina Bermudez, are good friends of Isabel.

Something struck me in the Preysler story. It's what ex-hubby Julio said about her: "She is not only the most beautiful woman on earth, she is also the best mother in the world."

Cesar's shoes

Tonight is the launch of Cesar Gaupo's Spring and Summer '06 Shoe Couture Fit. John Ramirez at Ayala Museum. This is Cesar's first foray into shoe design—a move prompted by Cesar's dedication that women, while having shoe fetish, often don't give as much thought to their shoes as they do to gowns.

"For everyone remember to bring shoes, for example, to fittings," said Cesar.

Cesar will exhibit 40 pairs of shoes. What a welcome departure from the red-carpet-marketing-induced clothes collections that we [illegible].

Now on Vogue. The premiere issue of Mert's Vogue with George Hamony on the cover is the biggest fashion issue. When will the next issue come out? When Condé Nast chair Si Newhouse gave the green light. But more on this next week.

After fair photos meeting—it came out in the Daily Mirror in London, Abbe Mone for some of her favorite jobs, notably Ft Worth, Chanel, Burberry—the latter two's campaigns are just winding up. Breaking trend. But behind the chronicled, however, are the editors of Vogue and Harper's Bazaar, from Paris to America. They announced that they would continue using Mone, saying this was the time to help her. Both her habits, not looks, [illegible].

E-mail the author at [illegible]

TSATSULA. Olivia and Nia in petal-textured embossed python, also in orange and camel lobster-embossed python. Olivia and Vanessa in camel lobster-embossed python, also in orange lobster-embossed python

Luxury in a clutch

THIS FALL, KATE SPADE launches Kate Spade Collect, a collection of limited-edition bags and shoes brought to a new level of opulence.

Among the standouts are a cage-frame evening clutch in delicate, rose-embossed python, a cinched hobo in chocolate suede and patent leather with a strap made of gold-turned chain, and high-heeled peep-toe pumps in metallic violet leather and suede.

"I've collected so many wonderful, one-of-a-kind vintage pieces over the years," Kate Spade. "I wanted to offer women something equally special. We named the line Collect, because it's about women collecting things that they love."

Shapes and shapes are given the luxe treatment in this line of bags and shoes, all made in Italy. A short handcuff door-to bag gets an extra glam touch a metallic embossed chevron print. A leather-trimmed envelope bag recalls nature's cutlery case, giving a sporty touch to decadent glitz.

As colorful as the colors and shapes of the bags are, Spade has fun with tone, too. A collection of sweet, framed miniatures are meant to be popped inside a larger bag.

Though the inclusion of the pieces a reckless, there's nothing fussy about them. "Women today are so expressive in how they accessorize, and glamour is no longer limited to big-deal occasions," says Spade.

On most bags, handsome hue a new consciousness, with plenty of gold and some nickel to catch the sun. Kate Spade Collect pieces may have an affluent sensibility, but wear them with poise, and they're still lovable.

BIG. Mini Kelsie in brown, coral, mandarin and chocolate leather

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LIFESTYLE

Lucky stripes

Metrobank's 'M Here card party showcased creations by six of the country's most in-demand designers

Text by Oneche V. Moral
Photos by Jim Oates Pascaran

THE INVITE, PRESS RELEASE and even the program voice-over said "Stripe Night" would unveil collections of six of the country's most in-demand designers.

Stripes, of course, in keeping with the theme set by the evening's host, Metrobank Card Corp., which was issuing its new credit card sporting the 'M Here striped logo. The designers' lineup, indeed, was enough to tempt fashion watchers into turning the Friday night traffic to make their way to the Makati venue.

Of course, guests should've been clued in there's no way a full collection showcase—of six designers at that—could fit in the SG season like Cinema in Greenbelt. But then the creative moxie in the industry (this time it was director Jadon Aquino) could be trusted to pull off even the impossible. So you couldn't blame the guests for expecting this was one of them.

By the time the show started, it was an SRO crowd, with a couple of dozens more lined up at the cinema lobby. (The fashion show was the main reason for the new Ayala Harmon Block.)

Alas, there were only six shows, one by each designer. The show lasted less than it took a guest to get from the ground floor to the fourth floor venue. Left high and dry, some reporters joked they'd probably mention the event just as an addendum to some other fashion story.

That aside, after all's said, the participating designers made it all worth it for the guests who decidedly dressed their own stripes tasks for the event.

Resourceful

Never one to take the easy route, Jojo Llanes wound together lengths strips of stripe to achieve his striped material. Ever resourceful, he found the exact shades of the card logo in his fabric roller. The resulting piece was pretty and sweet, a lively contrast to his signature tailored look, though the structure is unmistakably Llanes. He later mentioned, with a chuckle, that the Metrobank people asked for something "wholesome."

Not a fan of patterned fabrics himself, Ivan Iñaki Aseron yielded to the theme by mixing denim cutworks with striped cotton fabrics for his architectural feminine pieces. The striped parts were pieced diagonally in-

(CONTINUED ON C4)

DENNIS Lustico

AVEL Bacudio

Lucky stripes

From page C3

ward for a streamlined form. Orange satin piping added luxe to the dress.

The lone gown came from Dennis Lustico—a simple fuchsia chiffon number with a hand-pleated bodice and beaded straps, in a striped pattern, naturally. Having gained favor from the stylish set, Lustico said that, finally, he no longer had to beat himself mad over coming up with clothes that aimed to wow a crowd (*hindi na kina*-career, in street speak).

Avel Bacudio made an orange-and-aqua boned corset with cape and a miniskirt of five-shade, Post-It-like layers.

Menswear came from Joey Samson and Randy Ortiz. The young Samson showed a zippered twill jacket with a custom-embroidered 'M crest on one sleeve. For this young man, pants are never just pants. The pair was cut to extend outward, creating flaps on the back, so that the sides had no seams.

Ortiz's pinstripe hooded jacket and pants were stitched in the featured card's colors—blue, pink and orange.

RANDY Ortiz

POLISH supermodel Anna Rudnicka and her Filipino colleagues during the show's opening

LIFESTYLE

Whiff of German luxury

Escada's pricey gowns and dresses say tons about the timelessness of style

Text by Alice T. Vergara
Photos by Jim Guian Punzalan

IN THE END, ONLY THE jeans, dresses, twin sets and three-piece suits featured in Escada's recent fashion show stayed. The luxury brand's mind-bogglingly expensive gowns, trench coats and fur-trimmed leather jackets were eventually shipped back to Germany

A TASTE OF FRESHNESS FROM RUSTAN SUPERMARKET

As Rustan Supermarkets marks its 55th anniversary this November, it will once again take the lead as the pioneer in the food retail industry with the launch of something deliciously new from Rustan's Fresh.

Conceptualized in 2001, Rustan Supermarkets was the store to introduce a new and exciting "supermarket shopping experience" which involved all the 5 senses: sight, sound, touch, smell, and taste. In the past, supermarkets had a tendency to focus on their dry grocery goods, while their fresh departments were overlooked - and orderly situated - in the back of the store.

Four years ago, Rustan Supermarkets sought to change this practice by opening its first Rustan's Fresh at the Rockwell Center's Power Plant mall. Since then, it has managed to create a truly unique shopping experience where fresh goods get the attention they truly deserve.

The launch of TASTE in Rustan's Fresh builds on the pioneering spirit by offering its customers a new twist to supermarket shopping.

Located at Rustan's Fresh Makati, TASTE will offer Manila's most discerning gourmands, foodies, and health nuts the most extensive variety of premium specialty foods from the best food artisans of the world: French, Mediterranean, Japanese, Thai, Mexican, Indian, Spanish, American and Italian, among others. From packaged foods, imported dairy and deli to health and organic products, its extensive imported food section will feature a complete range of choices for every discerning consumer.

On September 22, TASTE will present "A World of Taste," a culinary demo, entertainer cooking show and lunch at Yum Yum (Makati), where each of the guests will be given "passports" to explore and discover the wonderful world of TASTE.

Using ingredients exclusively available at TASTE by Rustan's Fresh Supermarket, two celebrity chefs - representing two distinct global cuisines - will serve each course to the guests as it is prepared live onsite.

Margarita Fores, whose passion for fast (no cooking) is evident in the success of Cibo and Pasata, will prepare an enticing Italian appetizer as well as a main entrée. "TASTE is such a joy for food lovers like me. Thanks to its wide assortment of international ingredients," shares Fores. "It will surely widen my repertoire of dishes and help get my creative juices flowing. My goal has always been to showcase the best of the Philippines, both the talents and the produce, alongside with the best else world has to offer. TASTE will certainly help me see this through."

Le Soeffle's Ionie Sinclairs on the other hand, will serve a gastronomic sampling of fine French cuisine in the form of a delectable dessert and another main course. "TASTE makes cooking a lot easy and fun because you have all the ingredients from all over the world in one shop," she says.

According to Marian Tiongco, Rustan Supermarket's VP for Marketing & Merchandising: "TASTE is a haven for foodies! It brings together the best culinary food items from Asia, Europe, and America. TASTE also has a wide assortment of health and organic products. So whatever you're in the mood to indulge in your passion for food, TASTE is the place for you."

Take a tour of the world's finest gourmet items - from Japanese to Mediterranean, to healthy and organic. If it's at the tip of your tongue, it's all here in TASTE!

LAZO evening

LEATHER and biker

READY-to-fall

TRAVEL-in-style

LEATHER and printers

HONGKONG-INSPIRED
chi-chi

Whiff of German luxury

Escada and sportswear brand Puma were among the companies which participated in the recent "German Month," a highlight of which was a fashion show at the Ninoy Philippine Plaza. German ambassador to the Philippines Josef Stirnkorb graced the show, which featured, among others, Rikki supermodel Sara Rychlicka.

As GM of Escada, the exclusive distributors of Escada, Escada Sport and Laurel in the Philippines, Manfred Lee earlier flew to Munich to personally select clothes for the show. Most of these pieces are now available at Escada Shanga-La Mall and 8750 outlets. The gowns, however, are a different story. Fans of Escada would have to fly to the world's major fashion capitals to get one.

But fret no further, gorgeous Escada's latest collection becomes their very simple priced beyond the reach of the local market. With price tags ranging from P200,000 to P500,000, it's easy to understand why even the most unrepentant fashionista would have second thoughts of buying a dainty, cream beaded Escada piece designed by Germana Istina Bonito.

Escada's most affordable items are by no means cheap, either. Jeans can set you back by P40,000, while shirts start at P20,000 a piece. A three-piece suit, which could go as high as P100,000 is already a bargain next to the most basic $75,000 or the classic twin set ($90,000).

They're wearable, indeed, but not a few of Escada's pieces meant for the more mature woman (for whom can afford such pieces?) were a welcome home to more such pieces. Kim Idiosyncratic otherwise. Every thread and button that stains up on Escada appeal is worth its weight in gold.

Mind investment

"Admittedly Escada isn't for everyone," she says. "But for people with money to spend, Escada is an idiosyncratic investment when they go on business trips abroad. It imparts a certain pride to them to be seen in one of the purple-day deals with any amount of wine she's wearing."

Escada's current offering ranges from basic flattering power suits in feminine colors such as pink to leather shift dresses in various shades of green. Evenwear was definitely in the air, in the show directed by Raymond Vinnakota's line featured a number of 1920s dresses and tops made of dark lace and tulle overlay. The groovy look is classy and well in a few tuxedo pieces fit for the office.

But shoe and media Filipinos, beware! Escada's power is executed mostly of semi-beaded and sequined clothes and pieces enhanced by sweet by the tall and toned woman. For the show's finale, Jo sticks dotted up in two-inch wet and all, glided on the catwalk with a frost-masked serpentine corset.

"Of course, some of our best designers can do similar gowns as a fraction of the price," says Jo. "But perhaps the best they needs is to derive inspiration from such pieces since certain rare materials used for embellishing Escada gowns are either too expensive or hard to find. A transparency with Escada's chief can easily get them."

Apart from the superior materials and workmanship that go with each piece, Lee touches for Escada's superb fit, choice of colors and attention to classic lines. Such delicate stable items that most abnormally pricey clothes to wear, looks even over the hottest seasons.

E-mail the author at swagan@inquirer.com.ph

OFFICE staples

LACEY sizes

FLORAL beaded cutout

BEADED and strapless

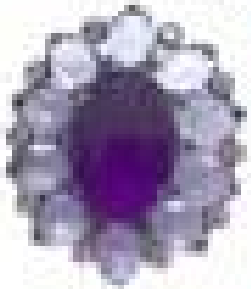
BEADED worn as one-piece number

SPRUCE up your office wardrobe basic with a statement-grabbing accent and be ready to receive compliments.
Pleat-open skirt (P1,118), available at Zara

PAIR a classic cut with every feminine—and comfortable—material and you've got yourself a wardrobe workhorse favorite.
Sheer orange top with pleated and ruffled collar (P1,340), available at Forever 21

ADD an instant dose of chic and glamour with these simple accessories that are versatile as themselves on your daily look.
Earlobe, cuff wrap and multi-tier necklace with silver beads (P888), Forever 21

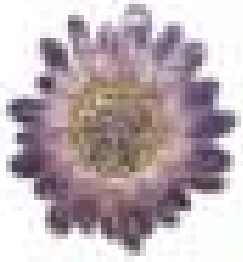
WHETHER pump or pointed, it's the heel that matters as the climb up the corporate ladder. Stitch peep-toed slingbacks with bow piping, purple-accented suede pumps and black peep-toed booties with metallic detail, prices available upon request at YNC



Window shopping

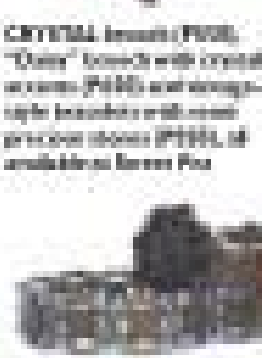
Luxe be a lady

By Shirley Chi and Bea Fonacier
Contributors



GARNET necklace with assorted crystals and faux pearls (P988)

HAS all the trappings of the very current wrapped dress and the sum of your favorite basic dresses.
Brown cutaway-neck paneling and floral print (P1,295), available at Zara



CRYSTAL brooch (P320), "Daisy" brooch with crystal accents (P320) and wrap-style bracelet with resin princess stones (P350), all available at Forever 21

HIGH neck! Check. Ruffles! Check. All the right elements of fallen-from-the-runway-to-the-city stuffiness.
Ramped halter-cover-up with floral ruffles (P1,995), available at Forever 21

SHADESIGN "Revue" belt with bow detail (P1,295), available at Zara

WORLD travelers back from their last summer vacations abroad: Photo-Hosted Dominicans Chris Cayanagan, Lindy Olivier, Carla B. Tongco, Cecille Reynoso Arienza, Johnny Velasquez, Vicky Fernandez Zubiet and Marijo Hontoz

GANG OF SIX. Top architect duo of Mendoza, son Johnny V. Juanico-owners Al Tongco and renowned interior decorator Miss Sandoval

HOTELiers duo: Gigi Bonhomme (Makati Shangri-La's resident manager; Tess Dy, Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts Philippines chair; Jarlath Lynch, Makati Shangri-La general manager and Shangri-Palace staff members

Lunch reunion at the Shang

COZY dining booth against the brick wall

IT WAS A SUPERB "WELCOME BACK" get-together at the fabulously renovated Shangri-La Palace at the Makati Shangri-La, yesterday.

Since many of my special pakaogan had been away (I myself had been traveling), we thought of reconnecting at Conde Divino who had flown New York, then with Johnny Velasquez and Marijo Montiel.

Al and Cecille Reynoso had arrived from San Francisco, while glam girl Vicky Zubiet had just been in San Francisco and Paris.

Missed was Edward Elmelu who had got back from his Provence but who had to rush to Istanbul. Also missed was Lucy Lozano, who had been in Rome, Barcelona and Monte Carlo, but who had to rush also to Istanbul.

Marijo Villamiranda had just arrived from New York, but before you could say cocktails, was off to San Francisco.

Not intending to miss the grand opening of Shangri-La's, we all decided to see what our very own from the Makati Shangri-La had transformed the Chinese restaurant's traditional trappings and style, into something contemporary and contemporary.

We were welcomed by a tall sumptuous sporting a chine doll look style and wearing a Peter Jo Lauret-designed cheongsam. We walked through the stylish leather-paneled walls to get to elegant private function rooms.

The lighting was adjustable; it had a beautiful black-and-gold throne plate matched with eclectic red tea cups.

The menu was simply to die for, pakaogan, with all the new dishes added to the traditional Chinese Cantonese menu. But the restaurant is known for, after all, the place you eat one-new talented Shangrainese chefs.

Appetizers were Crispy Deep-Fried Silver Sticker with Spicy Garlic Eggplant with Green; and a number of adorable seafood-shaped dim sum.

The soup was extremely healthy. Braised Bean Curd with Hard Conpoy. This was followed by Deep-Fried Prawns with Garlic Egg White and Pan-Fried Beef Fillet with Golden Mushrooms. Everyone raved over these two dishes.

Sautéed Fillet of Garoupa in X.O. sauce was next, followed by Stir-Fried Mixed Vegetables with Nor Han served with Lemon and Fried Rice wrapped in Lotus Leaf, which definitely had a superb flavor and aroma.

And to douse our palate and digest all these yummies, we ordered a hot dessert, "double-boiled Hasma with red dates and bird's nest."

And then, the whole group couldn't get enough of the divine menu, even with bird's nests and salted red eggs. That really topped the great lunch.

One thing's for sure, pakaogan, everyone agreed that Shang Palace, with its renovated new look, its new and excellent menu, and its unbelievable dim sums, will be seeing more patrons. (and isn't get enough of Shang dishes).

Baby's birthday

We also went to the great tea party of vivacious Bubby De Jesus, who celebrated another year of her lovely but beautiful life at the romantic Hilton Italian Restaurant of the popular Venetia Philippine Plaza, the hotel by Manila Bay, pakaogan.

With a sumptuous open buffet and a fun performances by Joy Visaya, everyone had a blast.

Hosting the pack of guests were Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, Jimmy Lapa, hotelier resident Nino Rasul and Virgie Barbers.

Also seen at the party were Louie and crowd.

HAIGHTI Shangri-La Hotel's newest recipient Jay Wheatley and host resort's top creative Pepper Tenkasdoon

SOUTHERN royal woman Bibing Maunlahuar Villaluz-recipient and lady of style Mary Jan Ojeda Lanuza

FREDDIE Olivia

PANATE dining room combo: Chinese contemporary chic ambience

ENTRANCE to one-stop elegant Shang Palace with the view of the main dining area

DEN DE JESUS, Sing Santos and Virgie Barbers

GEORGE Cruz, Boots Anonuevo and Bibi de Leon

HAIKATI Mayor Jejomar Binay, Dr. Elvira Patalinghug and John Bautista

ALICE Dee

HAMBRVE Tamano and Cuela Santos

CHA-CHA Cuenca, Olivia Trinidad, Pilar Aquino, Inno Sotto, Lydia Reyes and Rosemarie Hugo. Seated: Lulu Cuenca, Baby de Jesus and Tess Cantos

JANET Hong Jacobsen; Bing and Tessie Hong, partners of Ayen Hong's Lauret; relatives Baby O.J.; Annabelle Adriano; and Bobby Yap and husband Dr. Ed Yap

JOHN and Pilar Bautista with Nora Aunor

DE JESUS FAMILY. Queens of the day Baby Thelita de Jesus and husband Dr. Handy de Jesus, with their children Iza and Jesus OJ.

THOMAS Palacio, Baby de Jesus, popular couples Cecile and Handy Limjoco, and Linda and Ben Pesayco

TESS Bruno and multilingual Tourism Lady Mae Dagsaka

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH
Maurice Lecuche
Photos by Alex Van Haagen using Hasselblad

Tatler Ball

The hottest ticket in town and what promises to be the social event of the year is all set for its encores, Oct. 1, pakaogan.

The country's only true chronicler of high society, the Philippine Tatler, which, holds its annual ball to celebrate its fourth anniversary at Makati Shangri-La's Grand Ballroom.

It is also its twelfth-only event, as guest seems to be wanted.

As in the past, the Philippine Tatler Ball is expected to be packed with the town's elite-social, sentinel, politicians, business leaders, and A-list celebrities, dressed in their elegant best, and this year promises to be no different.

Highlight of the evening are the Tatler Awards, in which the magazine honors the most distinguished gastronomic most charitable hero; the Hassede Sacred sculpture; the patronage of the arts; the most eligible bachelor; the creative team; the style icon; and the best event honoree.

Who will get the awards? Just be here on the Philippine Tatler Ball.